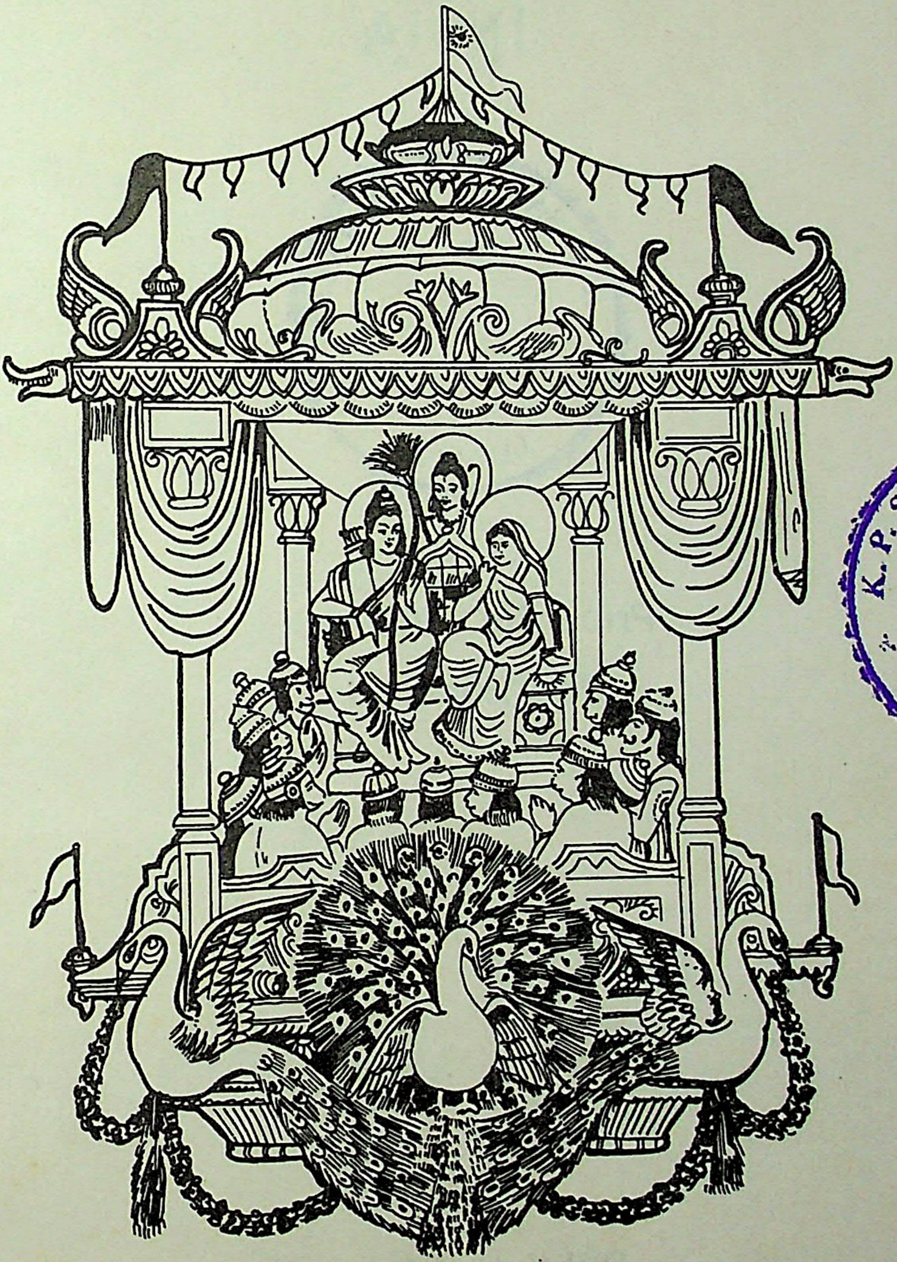
SHREE RAMCHARIT MANAS

SHREE GEETA PRESS

OM
SRI RAMCHRITMANAS

The Manas lake brimming over with the exploits of Sri Ram
With Hindi text and English translation



SHREE GEETA PRESS
INDIA

SHREE GEETA PRESS
67 INDUSTRIAL AREA
CHANDIGARH
INDIA

Price Rs. 100-00
One Hundred

Published By
JAI PRAKASH SHREE GEETA PRESS
INDIA

ॐ

Kalyana-Kalpataru

Manasa Number—I

August 1949

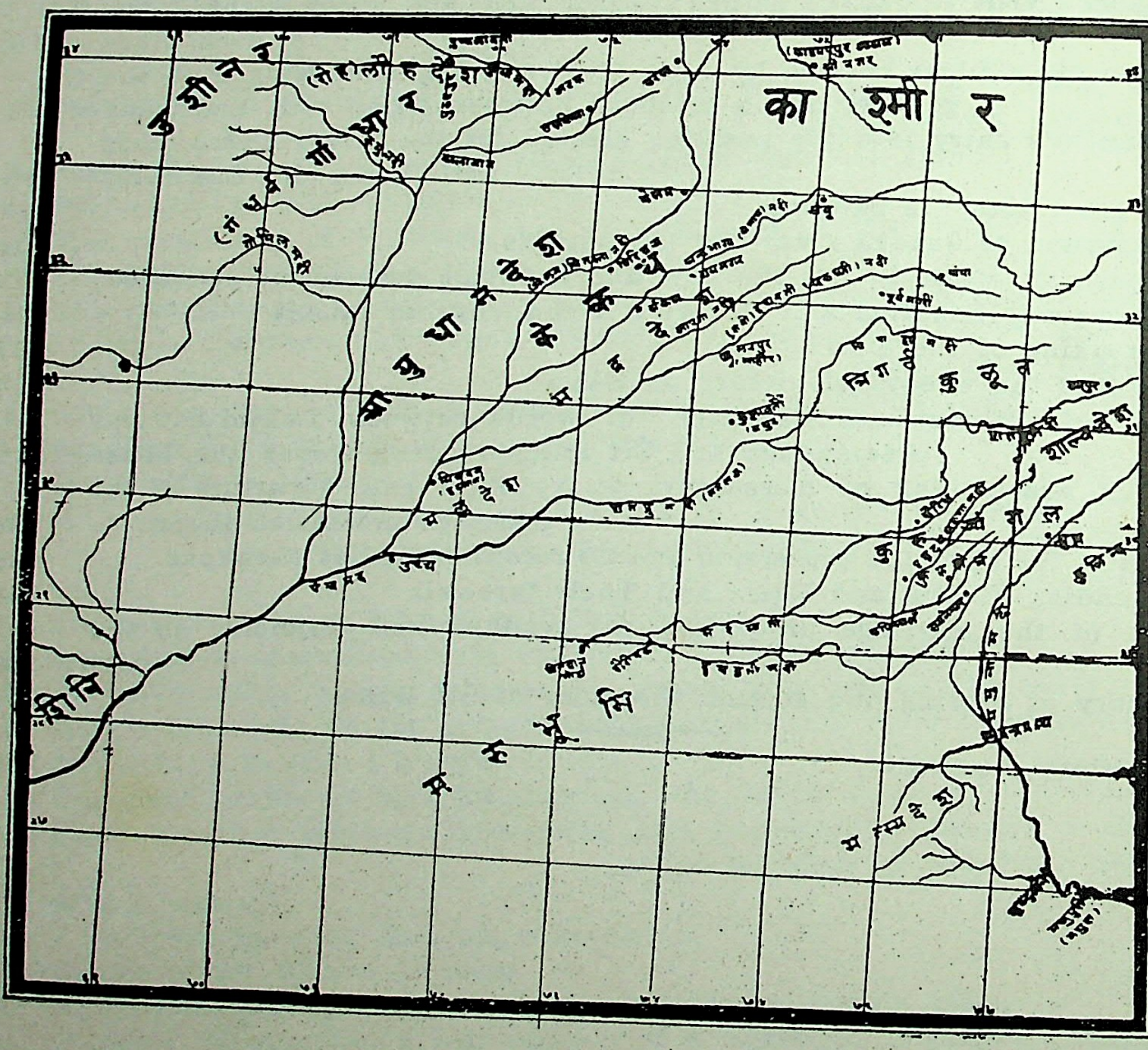
Contents

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

Descent I

(Bālakāṇḍa)

रामायणकालीन भारतवर्ष नं० २



मानचित्रकार—श्री वी०एच०वडेर।

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA KALPATARU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgitā* VI. 30)

Vol. XV] August 1949 [No. 1

दूर्वादलद्युतितनुं तरुणाब्जनेत्रं
हेमाम्बरं वरविभूषणभूषणाङ्गम् ।
कन्दर्पकोटिकमनीयकिशोरमूर्तिं
पूर्तिं मनोरथभुवां भज जानकीशम् ॥

Adore the Lord of Jānaki, whose swarthy form possesses the hue of the Dūrvā grass, whose eyes resemble a pair of full-blown lotuses, who is clad in yellow garments, whose limbs lend charm to His lovely ornaments, whose youthful person attracts the mind of millions of Cupids and who fulfils the objects of one's desire.

Tributes from Contemporary and other Mediaeval Poets

Sacred to the Hindu and the Muslim alike

The holy *Rāmacharitamānasa* is the very life-breath of saints. It is like Veda to the Hindu and the holy Koran itself to the Muslim.

Abdur Rahim Khan-ī-Khana.

A Source of Incomparable Joy

The story of Rāma sung by Tulasīdāsa grants all one's desires like the celestial cow. It is a mine of the fourfold rewards of human existence (viz., religious merit, prosperity, sensuous enjoyment and Liberation) and a source of incomparable delight and gladdens the heart by its very presence. It shines forth as a wreath of basil leaves, so charming to the bee-like hearts of holy men, and has thus served, says Toṣa, as a bridge for men intending to cross the ocean of mundane existence.

Toṣa.

Sweeter than Nectar

The poetry of Goswami Tulasidas is as it were the fourfold fruit (in the form of religious merit etc.) appearing on the celestial creepers; nay, it is endearing as the stream of milk flowing from the udders of the celestial cow. To put it otherwise, the poet bears on his broad bosom and round his neck a shining string of wish-yielding gems as it were. Nay, by its association with the story of the Lord the poet's mellifluous composition delights even liberated souls and is pleasing to the poet Raskhan. It mocks sugar, derides hardened sugar, chides sugar candy and makes nectar itself blush as it were.

Raskhan.

Tributes from Modern Admirers

[Messages were received from some leading men of this country in the year 1938 for the "Mānasa Number" of the Hindi 'Kalyan', and some opinions were culled from other sources. They are reproduced below, some having been translated from Hindi and others in original. It is sad to think that most of those gentlemen are no longer in our midst. Their opinions are nonetheless valuable now and will be of absorbing interest to the reader. *—Editor*]

The Best Work on Devotion

Tulasidas had a marvellous faith. His faith has bequeathed to the Hindus a precious book like the Ramayan. The Ramayan is a literary masterpiece; but its literary merit pales into insignificance before the charm of its devotional spirit. The realms of faith and intellect lie apart. Faith leads to the development of subjective knowledge or spiritual insight and is therefore conducive to internal purity as a matter of course. The intellect helps the growth of objective knowledge or the knowledge of the world. But no such relation as that of cause and effect exists between this latter knowledge and self-purification. Intellectual giants are found to be moral rakes too. But faith and immorality can never co-exist. The reader can understand from the above that a child can develop the highest faith and yet continue to possess a puny intellect. How can man attain this faith? An answer to this is found in the Gita, in the Ramacharitamanasa......I regard the Ramayan of Tulasidas as the best volume on the cult of Devotion.

M. K. Gandhi.

A Source of Ineffable Joy and Solace to Humanity

The *Mānasa-Rāmāyaṇa* of Goswami Tulasidas is a unique work of its kind in the literature of the world. It is a scripture epitomizing the teachings of the Vedas, Smṛtis and Purāṇas for all the four castes, viz., the Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, and for all the four religious orders, viz., students, householders, anchorites and recluses. The threefold current of Jñāna (spiritual knowledge), Bhakti (Devotion) and Vairāgya (Dispassion) is ever flowing there like the holy Triveṇī (the triple stream of the Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Saraswatī) at Prayag. It has been the be-all and end-all of the life of innumerable souls. Millions of devotees have drunk from it to their heart's fill the nectar of Jñāna, Bhakti and Vairāgya; and till the end of this creation many more millions will continue to derive unique joy and solace from this volume.

The world has not yet fully recognized the merits of this incomparable work. But my conviction is that even as its merits come to light more and more during the coming years, its rendering will appear in numerous languages of the world. This work is a source of ineffable joy and solace to the entire human race. Blessed are those who recite or listen to the *Mānasa-Rāmāyaṇa* or *Vinaya-Patrikā* of Goswami Tulasidas. And still more blessed are those who render invaluable service to the public by publishing cheap and beautiful editions of this book and making its

copies available to the humblest man. My prayer is that cheapest and most neatly printed editions of *Mānasa-Rāmāyaṇa* may reach the hands of the largest number and that countless men may be benefited by its holy teachings. Discourses on the *Rāmāyaṇa* are held in a number of towns and villages even to this day. Where no such discourses are held, arrangements should be made to hold them and its sacred teachings popularized more and more from day to day. *Madan Mohan Mālaviya.*

'Perfect Example of the Perfect Book'

Half a century later, contemporary with our Shakespeare, we find the poet and reformer Tulasidas (died 1623). This extraordinary man, who, if we take for our test the influence that he exercises at the present day, was one of the half-dozen great writers that Asia has produced, deserves more than a brief reference. He is commonly known to Europeans as the author of a history of Rāma, but he is far more than that. He occupies a position among the singers of Rāma *Saga*, peculiar to himself. Unlike the numerous religious poets who dwelt in the Doab, and whose theme was Kṛṣṇa, he lived humbly in Benares, unequalled and alone in his niche in the Temple of Fame. Disciples he had in plenty,—today they are numbered by millions,—but imitators, none. Looking back through the vista of centuries we see his noble figure standing in its own pure light as the guide and saviour of Hindustan. His influence has never ceased, nay, it has ever kept increasing; and only when we reflect upon the fate of Tantra-ridden Bengal or on the wanton orgies that are carried on under the name of Kṛṣṇa-worship can we justly appreciate the work of the man who in Northern India taught the infinite vileness of sin and the infinite graciousness of the Deity, and whose motto might have been—

'He prayeth best who loveth best all things both great and small.'

But Tulasidas did not only teach this elevated system of religion,—he succeeded in getting his teaching accepted. He founded no sect, laid down no dogmatic creed, and yet his great work is at the present day the one Bible of ninety millions of people, and fortunate it has been for them that they had this guide. It has been received as the perfect example of the perfect book and thus its influence has been exercised not only over the unlettered multitude but over the long series of authors who followed him, and especially over the crowd which sprang into existence with the introduction of printing at the beginning of the last century. As Mr. Growse says in the Introduction to his translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, of this author, "the book is in everyone's hands, from the court to the cottage, and is read and heard and appreciated alike by every class of the Hindu community, whether high or low, rich or poor, young or old." In fact, the importance of Tulasidas in the history of India cannot be overrated. Putting the literary merits of his work out of the question, the fact of its *UNIVERSAL* acceptance by all classes, from Bhagalpur to the Punjab, and from the Himalaya to the Nerbudda, surely demands more than a polite acknowledgement of his existence. Half a century ago, an old missionary said to me that no one could hope to understand the natives of Upper India till he had mastered every line that Tulasidas had written. I have since learned to know how right he was.

Sir G. A. Grierson in the *Linguistic Survey of India,* Vol. I, Part I, Introductory 1927 Calcutta.

The Finest Work in any Indian Vernacular

I have read Tulasidas's Ramayana through and through, at least three times, and entertain great respect and love for the poet and this great Work.

Tulasidas was a great devotee of the "Lord" combining in himself (a rare combination) the quintessence of Jñāna and Prema. His saintly life, his wide and tolerant outlook and his insight into the mysteries of existence cannot fail to engage the attention and admiration of even the casual reader. I believe his Ramayana is the finest work in any of the Indian vernaculars and, what is a bold thing to say, excels Valmiki's immortal epic in certain respects. So it is rightly regarded by the Hindi-speaking populations of India as a "gem of purest ray serene". To know Tulasidas's Ramayana is to know all that need be known.

I am glad that in the "Manasa Number" you are giving the authenticated text of the original Work along with its translation in prose. If I may make a suggestion in this connection, you should give an alphabetical Word Index; because, in the reading of the Ramayana, I have found that it contains many words the meaning of which is obscure even to a person well-versed in Sanskrit.

Hirendranath Datta

Musical Ring of Tulasidas's Poetry

The name of Goswami Tulasidas is quite familiar to the Marathas. He has already occupied a place of honour in the hierarchy of Maratha saints or Santa Malikas. His romantic life-story is a popular theme or "Akhyan" for our Haridasas and his lucid Dohas are relished by all. Years ago, I remember, a Maratha scholar of Jubbulpore, Mr. Jamdar, brought out an edition of "Tulasi Ramayan" for the Maratha public, in which he had given a Marathi translation of the original Hindi text and it was very much appreciated both by scholars and the public at large.

Tulasidas is a past master in simile and metaphor and like a mellow murmuring spring his lucid Dohas are music to the ear even of a Marathi layman, who is not conversant with the Hindi language. *N. C. Kelkar.*

Immortal Teachings of the Ramayana

Valmiki in Sanskrit and Tulasidas in Hindi have rendered themselves immortal by their epic works, which will ever live. The whole story of the Ramayana is elevating and inspiring. The loyalty of Rāma to his father and his regard for the views and wishes of his subjects; the wifely devotion of Sītā and the brotherly devotion of Lakshmana and Bharata; the wisdom of Shanta; the Bhakti of Hanuman, —these are but a few of the lessons they teach humanity for all time.

C. Y. Chintamani.

Ramayana, a very human Story

The Ramayana is a very human story; and the constant struggles between good and evil which run throughout the tale have a great fascination for me and I love reading it over and over.

Maharajadhirāj Sir Bijoy Chand Mahtab Bahadur of Burdwan.

Ramayan, the Bible of Humanity

You will be doing a distinct service in getting a popular edition of the Ramayan out...... The teachings of the book have formed the warp and woof of the life of the Indian villager and anything that will tend to the better understanding of the worthy lessons contained in that book will strengthen adherence to truth and emphasize service of humanity— whether it be as father, mother, son or wife—that an individual has the privilege to render during his life. The book has been rightly described by a well-known French writer—Chateau Briand—as the Bible of humanity and it will continue to be such as long as a reading public, rightly educated, is forthcoming to attend to its lessons.

V. N. Mehta.

An Epitome of all Scriptures and Philosophical Works

Tulasīdāsa has rendered a most valuable service to the world by composing the *Rāmacharitamānasa.* The scriptures and philosophical works, that were written in Sanskrit, had become almost a sealed book to the masses because of the waning popularity of that language. Their study was confined to a few scholars alone. People listened to them here and there in the form of religious discourses. Only such hearsay and oral knowledge was available to the masses. At this juncture came Tulasīdāsa, who placed before the public in the Hindi language the cream that he had extracted from the whole range of scriptural and philosophical literature. Ever since the *Mānasa* was composed one does not know what an untold number of men and women have derived and still derive spiritual benefit therefrom. Therefore, it will be no exaggeration to say that during the past three centuries the *Mānasa* alone has served the purpose of all the scriptures and philosophical works for the masses of Northern India.

The recitation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is popular in Northern India. In the morning after completing the daily routine and during the night people recite it either singly or in batches and there are hundreds of thousands of villagers who, though unlettered, have learnt by heart a number of verses from the *Rāmāyaṇa* by hearing and chanting them in groups, and they have occasion to repeat them from time to time. The words of Tulasīdāsa possess a charm which is peculiar to the words of a devotee and saint alone. That is the reason why the *Rāmāyaṇa* is sung with

love, devotion and reverence even to this day. And that is why numberless men and women have continued to derive help from this work in crossing the ocean of mundane existence. Tulasīdāsa wrote the *Mānasa* only as the outpouring of a devotee's heart and it is due to this nature of the work that its words possess such a unique power.

But even to those who are no devotees the book contains such a poetical charm, such mellifluence, such a graceful blending of sentiments and an art so highly developed that it can compete with the greatest epic poems of the world. Those who would enjoy the beauty of poetry alone can and do read it and feel blessed by enjoying the same. I go further and believe that even those who study this masterpiece as a work of poetry cannot but be imbued with the sentiment of devotion to some extent in the long run, to say nothing of those who read it reverently in a devout spirit. An English writer (Addison) wrote in one of his essays that it had been his ambition to cull the most sublime philosophical truths from philosophical libraries and scatter them in the streets for the masses. It is not known whether this ambition of his was realized through his essays or not; but it is unquestionably true that Tulasīdāsa has been able to scatter the highest truths of religion and philosophy, in a charming, graceful and plain language, not only in the streets but in every village and every home and in such a way that even an ignorant fool could not but be benefited thereby.

Rajendra Prasad.

Spiritual Development through Tulasidas's Ramayan

Ayodhya was a city state which was a model to the states of India and which may well be a model to the modern political India. Sri Rama was a great king who has been not merely idealized by the Hindus but idolized, deified and made example of to all men on earth so that we speak of *Ramaraj* when a state is well administered. He was noted for His three qualities: Hitavak, Priyavak and Madhuravak. It is not enough to be righteous or truthful. Whatever you say in support of truth and righteousness must be said sweetly and pleasantly as far as possible so as to do good to the opposite party. No greater service can be done in the domain of spiritual development than the propagation of literature relating to this great work, Tulasidas's Ramayan.

B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

Popularity of the Ramayana

No work of literature is more popular (than the Ramayana) and none commands a greater respect from rich and poor alike. Written centuries ago, it still retains a freshness and charm almost unrivalled in the literature of the whole world. There is no man in India who was not thrilled and inspired in his childhood by the great events and the noble ideas of the Ramayana.

Syamaprasad Mukerjee.

A Rare Masterpiece Dealing with both the Worlds

I read the Ramayan in prison 17 years ago. It had a varied appeal. The mind and soul had enough to feed upon and enrich themselves. The Ramayan can hold the field as one of those rare masterpieces which deal simultaneously and effectively with things of both the worlds.

Jairamdas Daulatram.

Procedure of Reciting the Ramacharitamanasa

Those who undertake to recite the *Rāmacharitamānasa* according to the correct procedure should before commencing the recitation invoke and worship the author, Goswami Tulasidas, the sage Vālmīki, Lord Śiva and Śrī Hanumān, and then invoke the Divine Couple, Sītā and Rāma, along with Śrī Rāma's three brothers (Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna), offer them the sixteenfold worship and meditate on them. The recitation should be commenced after that.

INVOCATION

तुलसीक नमस्तुभ्यमिहागच्छ शुचिव्रत ।
नैर्ऋत्य उपविश्येदं पूजनं प्रतिगृह्यताम् ॥ १ ॥
ॐ तुलसीदासाय नमः ।

"Obeisance to you, O Tulasīdāsa; please come here, O saint of holy vow. Taking your seat in the south-west, accept this homage. Obeisance to Tulasīdāsa."

श्रीवाल्मीक नमस्तुभ्यमिहागच्छ शुभप्रद ।
उत्तरपूर्वयोर्मध्ये तिष्ठ गृहणीष्व मेऽर्चनम् ॥ २ ॥
ॐ वाल्मीकाय नमः ।

"Obeisance to you, O Vālmiki; pray come here, O bestower of blessings. Take your seat in the north-east and accept my homage. Obeisance to Vālmiki."

गौरीपते नमस्तुभ्यमिहागच्छ महेश्वर ।
पूर्वदक्षिणयोर्मध्ये तिष्ठ पूजां गृहाण मे ॥ ३ ॥
ॐ गौरीपतये नमः ।

"Obeisance to You, O Spouse of Gaurī (Parvatī); pray come here, O mighty Lord. Kindly take Your seat in the south-east and accept my homage. Obeisance to the Lord of Gaurī."

श्रीलक्ष्मण नमस्तुभ्यमिहागच्छ सहप्रियः ।
याम्यभागे समातिष्ठ पूजनं संगृहाण मे ॥ ४ ॥
ॐ श्रीसपत्नीकाय लक्ष्मणाय नमः ।

"Obeisance to you, O Lakṣmaṇa; please come here with your beloved consort (Urmilā). Kindly occupy the southern quarter of the altar, and accept my homage. Obeisance to Lakṣmaṇa with his consort."

श्रीशत्रुघ्न नमस्तुभ्यमिहागच्छ सहप्रियः ।
पीठस्य पश्चिमे भागे पूजनं स्वीकुरुष्व मे ॥ ५ ॥
ॐ श्रीसपत्नीकाय शत्रुघ्नाय नमः ।

"Obeisance to you, O Śatrughna; please come here with your beloved consort. Seating yourself in the western quarter of this altar pray accept my homage. Obeisance to Śatrughna with his consort (Śrutakīrti)."

श्रीभरत नमस्तुभ्यमिहागच्छ सहप्रियः ।
पीठकस्योत्तरे भागे तिष्ठ पूजां गृहाण मे ॥ ६ ॥
ॐ श्रीसपत्नीकाय भरताय नमः ।

"Obeisance to you, O Bharata; pray come here with your beloved consort (Māṇḍavī). Please sit down in the northern

quarter of the altar and accept my homage. Obeisance to Bharata and his wife."

श्रीहनुमन्नमस्तुभ्यमिहागच्छ कृपानिधे।
पूर्वभागे समातिष्ठ पूजनं स्वीकुरु प्रभो ॥ ७ ॥
ॐ हनुमते नमः।

"Obeisance to you, O Hanumān; pray come here, O mine of compassion. Please occupy the eastern quarter and accept my homage, O Lord. Obeisance to Hanumān."

अथ प्रधानपूजा च कर्तव्या विधिपूर्वकम्।
पुष्पाञ्जलिं गृहीत्वा तु ध्यानं कुर्यात्परस्य च ॥ ८ ॥

The principal deity (Śrī Rāma accompanied by His Consort, Sītā) should then be worshipped with due ceremony. Taking flowers in the hollow of his palms the reciter should meditate on the supreme Deity (Śrī Rāma) in the light of the following verse:—

रक्ताम्भोजदलाभिरामनयनं पीताम्बरालंकृतं
श्यामाङ्गं द्विभुजं प्रसन्नवदनं श्रीसीतया शोभितम्।
कारुण्यामृतसागरं प्रियगणैर्भ्रात्रादिभिर्भावितं
वन्दे विष्णुशिवादिसेव्यमनिशं भक्तेष्टसिद्धिप्रदम् ॥ ९ ॥

"I ever adore Śrī Rāma, whose charming eyes resemble the petals of a red lotus, who is clad in yellow raiments and has a swarthy form endowed with a pair of arms, who wears a cheerful countenance, is accompanied by Śrī Sītā, and is an ocean of nectar in the form of mercy, who is waited upon even by Viṣṇu, Śiva and others and is meditated upon along with His three brothers and other favourite attendants (Hanuman, Vasiṣṭha and others) and who grants the desire of His devotees."

आगच्छ जानकीनाथ जानक्या सह राघव।
गृहाण मम पूजां च वायुपुत्रादिभिर्युतः ॥ १० ॥

"Please come, O Lord of Janaka's Daughter, along with Janakī, and accept my homage with Hanumān (son of the Wind-god) and others, O Scion of Raghu."

सुवर्णरचितं राम दिव्यास्तरणशोभितम्।
आसनं हि मया दत्तं गृहाण मणिचित्रितम् ॥ ११ ॥

"Occupy, O Rāma, this bejewelled seat of gold, offered by me, and spread over with an exquisite covering."

The Deity should then be worshipped with the sixteenfold equipage prescribed in the scriptures.*

ॐ अस्य श्रीमन्मानसरामायणश्रीरामचरितस्य श्रीशिवकाकभुशुण्डियाज्ञवल्क्यगोस्वामितुलसीदासा ऋषयः श्रीसीतारामो देवता श्रीरामनाम बीजं भवरोगहरी भक्तिः शक्तिः, मम नियन्त्रिताशेषविघ्नतया श्रीसीतारामप्रीतिपूर्वकसकलमनोरथसिद्ध्यर्थं पाठे विनियोगः।

"Of this story of Śrī Rāma, known by the name of "Mānasa Rāmayaṇa", Lord Śiva, the sages Kākabhuśuṇḍi and Yājñavalkya and Goswami Tulasidas are the seers; Śrī Rāma united with His Consort, Sītā, is the deity; the name 'Rāma' is the seed; Devotion, which cures the disease of transmigration, is the Śakti (motive force or energy); and the object of this recitation is to ward off all evils and accomplish all one's desires through the propitiation of Sītā and Rāma."

* The sixteenfold equipage of worship consists of:—

I. Pādya (water for washing the feet); 2. Arghya (water for washing the hands); 3. Achamanīya (water for rinsing the mouth); 4. Snānīya (water for performing the ablutions); 5. Vastra (raiment); 6. Abhūṣaṇa (ornaments); 7. Gandha (sandal-paste); 8. Puṣpa (flowers); 9. Dhūpa (burning incense); 10. Dīpa (light); 11. Naivedya (food); 12. Āchamanīya (water for rinsing the mouth); 13. Tāmbūla (betel-leaves with other ingredients for cleansing and scenting the mouth); 14. Stava-Pāṭha (singing praises); 15. Tarpaṇa (water for slaking thirst) and 16. Namaskāra (salutation).

Then water should be sipped thrice with the recitation of the following Mantras one after another: श्रीसीतारामाय नमः, श्रीरामचन्द्राय नमः and श्रीरामभद्राय नमः. A Prāṇāyāma should also be performed with the recitation of the Bīja-mantra sacred to Sītā and Rāma.

KARANYĀSA

Karanyāsa consists in invoking and installing typical Mantras on the various fingers, palms and back of the hands. In *Karanyāsa* as well as in *Anganyāsa* the Mantras are treated as possessing a living form and it is these personified forms of the Mantras that are touched and greeted by citing the names of the particular limbs. Through this process the reciter himself is identified with the Mantra and brought under the full protection of the Mantra-god. He is purified both externally and internally and is infused with divine energy. His spiritual practice runs a smooth course till the very end and proves beneficial to him.

The procedure of 'Karanyāsa' in this case is as follows:—

जग मंगल गुनग्राम राम के। दानि मुकुति धन धरम धाम के॥
अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः॥

(The hosts of virtues possessed by Rāma are a blessing to the world and the bestowers of Liberation, riches, religious merit and the divine Abode.)

Uttering these words the thumbs of both the hands should be touched with their index-fingers.

राम राम कहि जे जमुहाहीं। तिन्हहि न पाप पुंज समुहाहीं॥
तर्जनीभ्यां नमः॥

(Multitudes of sins dare not stand in the presence of those who utter the name 'Rāma' even while yawning.)

Uttering this the index-fingers of both the hands should be touched with their thumbs.

राम सकल नामन्ह ते अधिका। होउ नाथ अघ खग गन बधिका॥
मध्यमाभ्यां नमः॥

(May Your appellation 'Rāma', O Lord, excel all other divine names and play the role of a fowler in respect of birds in the form of sins.)

Uttering this the middle fingers of both the hands should be touched with their thumbs.

उमा दारु जोषित की नाईं। सबहि नचावत रामु गोसाईं॥
अनामिकाभ्यां नमः॥

(Bhagavān Śrī Rāma makes the whole creation dance like a wooden doll, O Pārvatī.)

Uttering this the ring-fingers of both the hands should be touched with their thumbs.

सन्मुख होइ जीव मोहि जबहीं। जन्म कोटि अघ नासहिं तबहीं॥
कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः॥

(The moment a creature turns its face towards Me—says the Lord—the sins committed by it through millions of births are dissolved then and there.)

Uttering this the little fingers of both the hands should be touched by their thumbs.

मामभिरक्षय रघुकुलनायक। धृत बर चाप रुचिर कर सायक॥
करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः॥

(Protect me, O Chief of Raghu's race, holding as You do an excellent bow and a brilliant arrow in Your hands.)

Uttering this the palms and backs of both the hands should be touched one after another each with the other hand.

ANGANYĀSA

In *Anganyāsa* the heart and other parts of the body are touched with all

the fingers of the right hand joined together.

जग मंगल गुनग्राम राम के। दानि मुकुति धन धरम धाम के॥
हृदयाय नमः॥

Uttering this the heart should be touched with all the five fingers of the right hand.

Similarly the forehead should be touched after uttering the following line:—

राम राम कहि जे जमुहाहीं। तिन्हहि न पाप पुंज समुहाहीं॥
शिरसे स्वाहा॥

The tuft of hair on the head should then be touched after uttering the following line:—

राम सकल नामन्ह ते अधिका। होउ नाथ अघ खग गन बधिका॥
शिखायै वषट्॥

After uttering the following line the right shoulder should be touched with the fingers of the left hand and *vice versa*:—

उमा दारु जोषित की नाईं। सबहि नचावत रामु गोसाईं॥
कवचाय हुम्॥

After uttering the following line both the eyes should be touched with the finger-tips of the right hand:—

सन्मुख होइ जीव मोहि जबहीं। जन्म कोटि अघ नासहिं तबहीं॥
नेत्राभ्यां वौषट॥

After uttering the following line the right hand should be taken round the head counter-clockwise from the forehead to the back of the head and back to the forehead, and the palm of the left hand should be struck with the index and middle fingers of the right.

मामभिरक्षय रघुकुलनायक। धृत बर चाप रुचिर कर सायक॥
अस्त्राय फट्॥

DHYANA

The form of the Lord should then be meditated upon with the help of the following lines:—

मामवलोकय पंकजलोचन। कृपा बिलोकनि सोच बिमोचन॥
नील तामरस स्याम काम अरि। हृदय कंज मकरंद मधुप हरि॥
जातुधान बरूथ बल भंजन। मुनि सज्जन रंजन अघ गंजन॥
भूसुर ससि नव बृंद बलाहक। असरन सरन दीन जन गाहक॥
भुजबल बिपुल भार महि खंडित। खर दूषन बिराध बध पंडित॥
रावनारि सुखरूप भूपबर। जय दसरथ कुल कुमुद सुधाकर॥
सुजस पुरान बिदित निगमागम। गावत सुर मुनि संत समागम॥
कारुनीक ब्यलीक मद खंडन। सब बिधि कुसल कोसला मंडन॥
कलि मल मथन नाम ममताहन। तुलसिदास प्रभु पाहि प्रनत जन॥

(Look at me, O Lord with lotus-like eyes! You rid the devotee of sorrow by Your gracious look. You are swarthy of hue like the blue lotus, O Hari, and a bee as it were drinking in the nectarean love of the lotus-like heart of Lord Śiva (an avowed enemy of the god of love). You crush the might of the demon hosts, delight the sages and saints and wipe out sins. You are a mass of fresh clouds for the crop in the form of the Brahmans (the gods on this earth), the refuge of the forlorn and a befriender of the humble. You relieve the burden of the earth by the enormous strength of Your arm and are an adept in killing the demons Khara, Dūṣaṇa and Virādha. An enemy of the demon king Rāvaṇa and bliss personified, You are the noblest of kings. Glory to You, who are as a moon to the lily-like race of Daśaratha. Your bright glory is known to the Purāṇas, Vedas and Tantras, and is sung by gods, sages and the assemblages of saints. Full of compassion, You crush false pride and are perfect in every way, O Ornament of Ayodhyā. Your Name wipes out the impurities of this sinful age and curbs the feeling of meum. Protect this humble devotee, O Lord of Tulasidāsa.)

N. B. The pauses for a nine-day and thirty-day recitation have been noted in the body of the text itself and have therefore not been separately mentioned.

What does the Ramayana teach us ?

By Hanumanprasad Poddar

1. God alone, who is absolute Existence, pure Intelligence and infinite Bliss, is projected everywhere. The whole universe as well as all that is going on in the universe are His manifestation and play.

2. The Supreme Deity bodies Himself forth from time to time with a view to redeeming the virtuous through love and the evil-doers by punishment, and plays the role of an Ideal Man for the good of humanity.

3. Surrender to the Lord is the best means of attaining salvation. Vibhīṣaṇa is a typical example of such surrender.

4. Truth is the highest religion; one should cheerfully renounce power and pelf, nay, one's very life, for the sake of truth. The life of Śrī Rāma is an embodiment of truth.

5. God-Realization is the highest goal of human existence and this can be attained by dedicating oneself to the Lord and performing one's duties for Him alone, without attachment to the fruit and in a spirit of renunciation.

6. It is the foremost duty of those who believe in the institution of Varṇāśrama to follow the rules of Varṇāśramadharma.

7. It is the paramount duty of a son to serve his parents. This is exemplified in the life of Śrī Rāma.

8. Supreme and undivided devotion to her husband is the highest duty of a wife. Śrī Sītā was a living embodiment of such devotion.

9. It is the highest duty of a man to make his brothers happy. Śrī Rāma, Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Satrughna should be regarded as ideal brothers.

10. It is the foremost duty of the people to serve their ruler even at the cost of their own lives. This was exemplified by (1) the people of Ayodhyā at the time of Śrī Rāma's departure for the forest and (2) by the monkey-subjects of King Sugrīva, who laid down their lives in the war between Śrī Rāma and Rāvaṇa.

11. One should never lend countenance to the wrong-doings of an unjust and unrighteous ruler. It is our sacred duty to raise our voice against such a ruler, no matter if he is our real brother. This is exemplified in the life of Vibhīṣaṇa.

12. It is the paramount duty of a ruler to renounce his dearest object in order to please his subjects. Śrī Rāma's abandoning of Sītā is a noble example of this.

13. A ruler should give away his all in performing sacrifices for the welfare of his subjects. This is exemplified in the lives of King Daśaratha and Bhagavān Śrī Rāma.

14. The mightiest monarch will surely meet with his end if he offends against the sacred laws of morality and commits outrage on women. The case of Rāvaṇa can be cited by way of an example.

15. One should be prepared to lay down one's very life for the sake of a friend and should help him in every way. The friendship of Śrī Rāma and Sugrīva, on the one hand, and of Śrī Rāma and Vibhīṣaṇa, on the other, should be recognized as ideal in this respect.

16. A devotee should always keep himself engaged in serving the Lord in a disinterested spirit. This is fully exemplified in the life of Śrī Hanumān.

17. An ideal wife should love her step-children in the same way as her own progeny. This is exemplified in the lives of Kausalyā and Sumitrā.

18. The Brahmans (the priestly class) as well as hermits should always be honoured by means of gifts and respectful behaviour. This is exemplified in the life of Śrī Rāma.

19. One should spend one's spare moments in talking of the Lord or dwelling in one's mind on noble thoughts. This was done by Śrī Rāma and His brothers whenever they met together.

20. One should prostrate oneself at the feet of one's teacher, parents, elder brother and so on every morning.

21. One should offer oblations of water (*Tarpaṇa*) and food (*Śrāddha*) to one's ancestors with reverence.

22. One should always and in every circumstance raise one's voice against injustice. This is exemplified in the life of Lakṣmaṇa.

23. One should undergo the severest ordeal for the sake of duty. This is exemplified in the lives of Śrī Rāma. Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and Bharata.

24. Every member of the twice-born classes should perform his Sandhyā (morning and evening prayers) at the right time every day.

25. One should always be fearless. Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were living embodiments of fearlessness.

26. One should never marry more women than one. The life of Śrī Rāma should be taken as an ideal in this respect.

27. One should be ever ready to help sages and anchorites in performing their religious rites without interference from outside. This is exemplified in the lives of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.

28. One should mete out a friendly treatment even to those who do one wrong. The behaviour of Śrī Rāma towards Kaikeyī should be taken as an ideal in this respect.

29. One should love the meanest of creatures. This is exemplified in the life of Śrī Rāma.

30. By taking refuge at the feet of the Lord and bearing their dust on its head, even an inanimate object can become animate. The case of Ahalyā can be cited by way of example.



An Appreciation of the Tulasikrita Ramayana

By Edwin Greaves

For a foreigner to pose as a critic of the works of the great Hindi poets might well be regarded as an impertinence; but perhaps he may venture to lay a wreath of appreciation at the feet of the greatest of them all, the Gusāin Tulasīdās, whose *Rāmāyaṇa* he has known for very many years.

Tulasīdās wrote much, and nothing that he has written can be lightly esteemed; but not all the works that have been attributed to him are accepted by Hindi scholars as authentic. It is therefore possible that a few of the less valued poems which bear his name are not by Tulasīdās and cannot, therefore, be brought forward as evidence of the lapses of a great writer.

Of all his works the *Rāmāyaṇa* or *Rāmacharitamānasa* may be regarded as holding the place of pre-eminence. I remember one great Hindi scholar hesitating to accept this conclusion, considering that the highest place should be given to the *Binaya-Patrikā*. The *Binaya-Patrikā* doubtless displays special abilities which are not so conspicuous in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, but the book must remain a sacred enclosure for the initiated few. Very many are capable of appreciating the *Rāmāyaṇa*, who have not the knowledge rightly to value or even to understand fully the somewhat involved and intricate stanzas of the *Binaya-Patrikā*.

An outstanding feature of the *Rāmacharitamānasa* is that it appeals to all classes of people, even to those who cannot read but are only listeners. It delights the simple villager, it is no less a joy to the scholar. The story is marvellously well told and sustains the interest of the reader right through; it fascinates by its rich glow, its wealth of imagery, its vivid language, its music, its grace and felicity of expression. Its levels of excellence may vary; but the writer never drivels (as some really fine poets do under bilious attacks), and the book comes to us as a gloriously well-rounded whole.

The question very naturally arises: What qualities does the Tulasikṛta *Rāmāyaṇa* possess, which have won for it such a well-secured pre-eminence in Hindi Literature ?

With some hesitation the writer hazards the attempt to give something in the way of an answer to this question, though by no means an exhaustive one.

1. The poet's mind is engrossed in his subject, not in himself. His concern is to direct the reader's attention to Rāma—his greatness and his goodness, and not to the cleverness of the writer. His devotion to Rama simply floods all his verses, they are saturated with his passionate affection for his lord and master. He writes not to procure fame for himself but to make secure the glory of Rāmachandra and Sītā.

2. With this end in view he makes it his great aim to be intelligible. He is out to make the reader understand and not to compel him to admire the writer's learning or skill or dexterity.

The whole passage in which this matter is touched on, and in which he

discloses his intention to use the simple *Bhāṣā*, is exceedingly interesting.

भाषा भनिति भोरि मति मोरी।
हँसिबे जोग हँसें नहिं खोरी॥
प्रभु पद प्रीति न सामुझि नीकी।
तिन्हहि कथा सुनि लागिहि फीकी॥
हरि हर पद रति मति न कुतरकी।
तिन्ह कहुँ मधुर कथा रघुबर की॥

There are doubtless many verses which present difficulties to a foreign reader, possibly some which are not easy for every Indian reader; but any such obscurities arise from the subject-matter: the poet does not lay himself out to impress the student with the author's profundity and erudition. One of the great charms of the poem is the simplicity of the language. The writer is intent on being "understood of the common" people; his aim is to make Rāma popular, not to advertise Tulasīdās.

3. Another remarkable feature of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is the great variety of the fare, the freedom from monotony. The combination of metres is very happy. Very largely there are four *chaupāīs* followed by a *dohā*, though occasionally the grouping of the *chaupāīs* and *dohās* is different. A change is rung by the insertion of *soraṭhās* from time to time, which gives a certain piquancy. A further relief is offered by the introduction of *chhandas*, and these of more than one kind. These *chhandas* add greatly to the beauty of the work. At times they are deeply impressive by the sublimity of their matter and language. Take, for instance, the *chhanda* commencing—

जय जय सुरनायक जन सुखदायक प्रनतपाल भगवंता।

in the *Bālakāṇḍa*. In other places these *chhandas* are resonant with the clash of conflict and the wild confusion of the death struggles of fierce combatants, as in the *Lankākāṇḍa*.

Further variety is obtained by the adoption of a tolerably wide vocabulary and a delightful ringing of changes in the forms of words, often necessitated by the number of instants demanded by the line. The Gusāin possessed an almost magical power of making any word fit into any place, lengthening it or shortening it, compressing it or twisting its tail, or crushing its head between its shoulders, and yet readily recognizable in spite of all its transformation. I have noted eleven different forms of the word '*Aisā*' and similar variations might be discovered in the pronouns and in other words and particles. Occasionally alliteration is indulged in. Perhaps the best illustration of this is a line in the *Chhanda* referred to above; it runs:—

जो भव भय भंजन जन मन रंजन गंजन बिपति बरूथा।

The poet manifests exquisite taste in the adoptation of words and phraseology and *swing* of the metre to the matter being presented and offers a luxurious wealth of variety in the way of भाव and रस. It would be well-nigh impossible to make a list of all the classes of subjects dealt with and the emotions seeking expression. The presentation of the characters is distinctly dramatic. It is true that to the Western mind some of the situations may appear to be somewhat strained and the emotions and the language in which they find expression a little overwrought: but this need not diminish our admiration for the dramatic presentation of the various interesting people to whom the reader is introduced.

The poet appears to be equally at home in quiet narrative, in the portrayal of domestic felicity—and infelicity (alas ! poor Kaikeyī)—, in the brunt of battle. in the tender relationships between parents and children, between brothers and between husband and wife. Perhaps one of the finest things in the whole book is the part recording the conversation between Rāma and Sītā before they set out for their long exile. He bravely strives to spare her the hardships of the life which lies before him and leave her cared for at home; she is equally bravely intent on sharing the sufferings of her husband, be they what they may. She does not pose as doing the difficult thing loyally, as a mere matter of duty; she urges her suit in a far more winsome way: the forest hardships shared with her lord will be heaven, the palace without him will be hell.

4. The humour of Tulasīdās deserves a section to itself. In life and literature humour counts for so much. In any philosophy of life the absence of humour means a defect of tremendous importance. Passages of almost boisterous humour readily recur to one's mind. Take, for instance, the bluster of Paraśurāma and the bubbling fun of Lakṣmaṇa as he replies to his anger; or notice again the courting of Lakṣmaṇa by Śūrpaṇakhā and his banter in replying to her advances. The story of Hanumān and his tail at the palace in Lankā is bristling with rollicking humour. The same is true of the description of Śiva's gruesome crowd of followers (in the *Bālakāṇḍa*). Many passages from the *Lankākāṇḍa* might be cited, which have something approaching a grim and even weird humour running through them. Sometimes the humour is combined with piercingly keen irony. Am I wrong in finding a very outstanding illustration of this in the line—

समरथ कहँ नहिं दोष गोसाइँ ।

Some would take this as not irony but to be literally interpreted in all seriousness.

Tastes differ in poetry as in much else. To some readers Bihari Lal makes a strong appeal. He is certainly a marvellous word-juggler, but beyond this what qualities of a poet are to be found in *Satsaī* ? Sūrdās proves very fascinating to others. No one would belittle his literary grace and charm or doubt the music of his verses; but one is tempted to recall Thomas Carlyle's remark about Macaulay's faultless English, ..."Flow on, thou shining river." Sūrdās lives on a high plateau with wondrous flowers and fruits, but does not the country get a little tame? The level is a high level, but would not a few precipices and crags be bracing ? Kabīr had greatness of a kind. Probably no poet could say so much in so few words. For the power of compression and for rough rugged strong phrases he is unequalled; and his couplets contain so much sound practical philosophy. But Kabīr and Tulasīdās have not enough in common to invite a comparison between the two.

Many poets have enriched Hindi Literature, but surely Tulasīdās stands out as the greatest of them all. Others may possess single excellences in a slightly higher degree; but Tulasīdās combines so many and so great excellences and there is such a brave and gentle spirit permeating the whole of his *Rāmāyaṇa*. He is worthy not only of our admiration but also of our love, and he is loved; and certainly there is no Hindi book so widely found in palace and in hut and so greatly treasured.

ॐ

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

(The Mānasa lake containing the exploits of Śrī Rāma)

Descent One

(Balakanda)

श्लोक

वर्णानामर्थसङ्घानां रसानां छन्दसामपि ।
मङ्गलानां च कर्त्तारौ वन्दे वाणीविनायकौ ॥ १ ॥

I reverence Vāṇī (the goddess of speech) and Vināyaka (Lord Ganeśa), the originators of sounds represented by the alphabet, of the multitudes of objects denoted by those sounds of poetic sentiments as well as of metres, and the begetters of all blessings. (1)

भवानीशङ्करौ वन्दे श्रद्धाविश्वासरूपिणौ ।
याभ्यां विना न पश्यन्ति सिद्धाः स्वान्तःस्थमीश्वरम् ॥ २ ॥

I greet goddess Pārvatī and Her consort, Bhagavān Śankara, embodiments of reverence and faith respectively, without which even the adept cannot perceive God enshrined in their very heart. (2)

वन्दे बोधमयं नित्यं गुरुं शङ्कररूपिणम् ।
यमाश्रितो हि वक्रोऽपि चन्द्रः सर्वत्र वन्द्यते ॥ ३ ॥

I make obeisance to the eternal preceptor in the form of Lord Śankara, who is all wisdom, and resting on whose brow the crescent moon, though crooked in shape, is universally adored. (3)

सीतारामगुणग्रामपुण्यारण्यविहारिणौ ।
वन्दे विशुद्धविज्ञानौ कवीश्वरकपीश्वरौ ॥ ४ ॥

I pay homage to the king of bards (Vālmīki) and the chief of monkeys (Hanumān), of pure intelligence, both of whom sport in the holy woods in the shape of glories of Sītā and Rāma. (4)

उद्भवस्थितिसंहारकारिणीं क्लेशहारिणीम् ।
सर्वश्रेयस्करीं सीतां नतोऽहं रामवल्लभाम् ॥ ५ ॥

I bow to Sitā, the beloved consort of Śrī Rāma, who is responsible for the creation, sustenance and dissolution (of the universe), removes afflictions and begets all blessings.

(5)

यन्मायावशवर्त्ति विश्वमखिलं ब्रह्मादिदेवासुरा यत्सत्त्वादमृषैव भाति सकलं रज्जौ यथाहेर्भ्रमः ।
यत्पादप्लवमेकमेव हि भवाम्भोधेस्तितीर्षावतां वन्देऽहं तमशेषकारणपरं रामाख्यमीशं हरिम् ॥ ६ ॥

I adore Lord Hari, known by the name of Śrī Rāma, who is superior to and lies beyond all causes, whose Māyā (illusive power) holds sway over the entire universe including gods from Brahmā (the Creator) downwards and demons, whose presence lends positive reality to the world of appearances,—even as the false notion of a serpent is entertained with reference to a rope,—and whose feet are the only bark for those who are eager to cross the ocean of mundane existence.

(6)

नानापुराणनिगमागमसम्मतं यद् रामायणे निगदितं क्वचिदन्यतोऽपि ।
स्वान्तःसुखाय तुलसी रघुनाथगाथाभाषानिबन्धमतिमञ्जुलमातनोति ॥ ७ ॥

For the gratification of his own self Tulasīdāsa brings forth this very elegant composition relating in common parlance the story of the Lord of Raghus, which is in accord with the various Purāṇas, Vedas and the Āgamas (Tantras), and incorporates what has been recorded in the Rāmāyana (of Vālmīki) and culled from some other sources.

(7)

सो०—जो सुमिरत सिधि होइ गन नायक करिबर बदन ।
करउ अनुग्रह सोइ बुद्धि रासि सुभ गुन सदन ॥ १ ॥

May Lord Ganeśa, the leader of Śiva's retinue, whose very thought ensures success, who carries on his shoulders the head of a beautiful elephant, who is a repository of wisdom and an abode of blessed qualities, shower his grace.

(1)

मूक होइ बाचाल पंगु चढ़इ गिरिबर गहन ।
जासु कृपाँ सो दयाल द्रवउ सकल कलि मल दहन ॥ २ ॥

May that merciful Lord, whose grace enables the dumb to wax eloquent and a cripple to ascend an inaccessible mountain, and who burns all the impurities of the Kali age, be moved to pity.

(2)

नील सरोरुह स्याम तरुन अरुन बारिज नयन ।
करउ सो मम उर धाम सदा छीरसागर सयन ॥ ३ ॥

May the Lord who ever sleeps on the ocean of milk, and who is swarthy as a blue lotus and has eyes resembling a pair of full-blown red lotuses, take up His abode in my bosom.

(3)

कुंद इंदु सम देह उमा रमन करुना अयन ।
जाहि दीन पर नेह करउ कृपा मर्दन मयन ॥ ४ ॥

May the crusher of Cupid, Bhagavān Śiva, whose form resembles in colour the jasmine flower and the moon, who is the consort of goddess Pārvatī and an abode of compassion and who is fond of the afflicted, be gracious. (4)

बंदउँ गुरु पद कंज कृपा सिंधु नररूप हरि ।
महामोह तम पुंज जासु बचन रबि कर निकर ॥ ५ ॥

I bow to the lotus feet of my Guru, who is an ocean of mercy and is no other than Śrī Hari Himself in human form, and whose words are sunbeams as it were for dispersing the mass of darkness in the form of gross ignorance. (5)

चौ०—बंदउँ गुरु पद पदुम परागा । सुरुचि सुबास सरस अनुरागा ॥
अमिअ मूरिमय चूरन चारू । समन सकल भव रुज परिवारू ॥ १ ॥
सुकृति संभु तन बिमल बिभूती । मंजुल मंगल मोद प्रसूती ॥
जन मन मंजु मुकुर मल हरनी । किएँ तिलक गुन गन बस करनी ॥ २ ॥
श्रीगुर पद नख मनि गन जोती । सुमिरत दिब्य दृष्टि हियँ होती ॥
दलन मोह तम सो सप्रकासू । बड़े भाग उर आवइ जासू ॥ ३ ॥
उघरहिं बिमल बिलोचन ही के । मिटहिं दोष दुख भव रजनी के ॥
सूझहिं राम चरित मनि मानिक । गुपुत प्रगट जहँ जो जेहि खानिक ॥ ४ ॥

I greet the pollen-like dust of the lotus feet of my preceptor, refulgent, fragrant and flavoured with love. It is a lovely powder of the life-giving herb, which allays the host of all the attendant ills of mundane existence. It adorns the body of a lucky person even as white ashes beautify the person of Lord Śiva, and brings forth sweet blessings and joys. It rubs the dirt off the beautiful mirror in the shape of the devotee's heart; when applied to the forehead in the form of a Tilak (a religious mark), it attracts a host of virtues. The splendour of gems in the form of nails on the feet of the blessed Guru unfolds divine vision in the heart by its very thought. The lustre disperses the shades of infatuation; highly blessed is he in whose bosom it shines. With its very appearance the bright eyes of the mind get opened; the attendant evils and sufferings of the night of mundane existence disappear; and gems and rubies in the shape of stories of Śrī Rama, both patent and hidden, wherever and in whatever mine they may be, come to light— (1—4)

दो०—जथा सुअंजन अंजि दृग साधक सिद्ध सुजान ।
कौतुक देखत सैल बन भूतल भूरि निधान ॥ १ ॥

—as, for instance, by applying to the eyes the miraculous salve known by the name of Siddhāñjana (the eye-salve of perfection) strivers, adepts as well as men of wisdom easily discover a host of mines on hill-tops, in the midst of forests and in the bowels of the earth. (1)

चौ॰—गुरु पद रज मृदु मंजुल अंजन । नयन अमिअ दृग दोष बिभंजन ॥
तेहिं करि बिमल बिबेक बिलोचन । बरनउँ राम चरित भव मोचन ॥ १ ॥
बंदउँ प्रथम महीसुर चरना । मोह जनित संसय सब हरना ॥
सुजन समाज सकल गुन खानी । करउँ प्रनाम सप्रेम सुबानी ॥ २ ॥
साधु चरित सुभ चरित कपासू । निरस बिसद गुनमय फल जासू ॥
जो सहि दुख परछिद्र दुरावा । बंदनीय जेहिं जग जस पावा ॥ ३ ॥
मुद मंगलमय संत समाजू । जो जग जंगम तीरथराजू ॥
राम भक्ति जहँ सुरसरि धारा । सरसइ ब्रह्म बिचार प्रचारा ॥ ४ ॥
बिधि निषेधमय कलि मल हरनी । करम कथा रबिनंदनि बरनी ॥
हरि हर कथा बिराजति बेनी । सुनत सकल मुद मंगल देनी ॥ ५ ॥
बटु बिस्वास अचल निज धरमा । तीरथराज समाज सुकरमा ॥
सबहि सुलभ सब दिन सब देसा । सेवत सादर समन कलेसा ॥ ६ ॥
अकथ अलौकिक तीरथराऊ । देइ सद्य फल प्रगट प्रभाऊ ॥ ७ ॥

The dust of the Guru's feet is a soft and agreeable salve, which is ambrosia as it were for the eyes and remedies the defects of vision. Having brightened my eyes of discernment thereby I proceed to relate the story of Śrī Rāma, which secures freedom from the bondage of mundane existence. First I reverence the feet of Brahmans, the very gods on earth, who are able to dispel all doubts born of ignorance. Then I make loving obeisance, in a polite language, to the whole body of pious souls, the mines of all virtues. The conduct of holy men is noble as the career of the cotton plant, the fruit whereof is tasteless, white and fibrous (even as the doings of saints yield results which are free from attachment, stainless and full of goodness)*. Even by suffering hardships (in the form of ginning, spinning and weaving) the cotton plant covers others' faults and has thereby earned in the world a renown which is worthy of adoration. The assemblage of saints, which is all joy and felicity, is a moving Prayāga (the king of all holy places) as it were. Devotion to Śrī Rāma represents, in this moving Prayāga, the stream of the holy Gangā, the river of the celestials; while the proceeding of an enquiry into the nature of Brahma (the Absolute) constitutes the Saraswatī (a subterranean stream which is traditionally believed to join the Gangā and the Yamunā at Prayāga, thus accounting for the name 'Triveṇī', which signifies a meeting-place of three rivers). Discourses on Karma or Action, consisting of injunctions and interdictions, have been spoken of as the sacred Yamunā,—a daughter of the sun-god in her angelic form—washing the impurities of the Kali age; while the anecdotes of Viṣṇu and Śiva stand out as the triple stream known as Triveṇī, bringing joy and blessings to those who listen to them. Unwavering faith in their own creed constitutes the immortal banyan tree and noble actions represent the royal court of that king of holy places. Easy of access to all on any day and at every place, this moving Prayāga assuages the afflictions of those who resort to it with reverence. This king

* The fruit of the cotton plant has been characterized in the original as 'Nirasa', 'Viśada' and 'Guṇamaya', which words can be interpreted both ways as in the rendering given above.

of holy places is beyond all description and supra-mundane in character; it bestows the reward immediately and its glory is manifest. (1—7)

दो०—सुनि समुझहिं जन मुदित मन मज्जहिं अति अनुराग ।
लहहिं चारि फल अछत तनु साधु समाज प्रयाग ॥ २ ॥

Men who having heard the glory of this moving Prayāga in the form of the assemblage of holy men appreciate it with an enraptured mind and then take a plunge into it with extreme devotion obtain the four rewards* of human existence during their very lifetime. (2)

चौ०—मज्जन फल पेखिअ ततकाला । काक होहिं पिक बकउ मराला ॥
सुनि आचरज करै जनि कोई । सतसंगति महिमा नहिं गोई ॥ १ ॥
बालमीक नारद घटजोनी । निज निज मुखनि कही निज होनी ॥
जलचर थलचर नभचर नाना । जे जड़ चेतन जीव जहाना ॥ २ ॥
मति कीरति गति भूति भलाई । जब जेहिं जतन जहाँ जेहिं पाई ॥
सो जानब सतसंग प्रभाऊ । लोकहुँ बेद न आन उपाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
बिनु सतसंग बिबेक न होई । राम कृपा बिनु सुलभ न सोई ॥
सतसंगत मुद मंगल मूला । सोइ फल सिधि सब साधन फूला ॥ ४ ॥
सठ सुधरहिं सतसंगति पाई । पारस परस कुधात सुहाई ॥
बिधि बस सुजन कुसंगत परहीं । फनि मनि सम निज गुन अनुसरहीं ॥ ५ ॥
बिधि हरि हर कबि कोबिद बानी । कहत साधु महिमा सकुचानी ॥
सो मो सन कहि जात न कैसें । साक बनिक मनि गुन गन जैसें ॥ ६ ॥

The result of an immersion into the sacred waters of this king of holy places is instantly perceived: crows turn into cuckoos and herons into swans. Let no one marvel to hear this; the glory of contact with saints is no secret. Vālmīki†, Nārada‡ and Agastya§, who was born of a pitcher, have related the story of their birth and transformation with their own lips. Of the various creatures, both animate and inanimate, living in this world, whether in water or on land or in the air, whoever has ever attained wisdom, glory, salvation, material prosperity or welfare anywhere and by any means whatsoever, know it to be the result of association with holy men; there is

---

* The four rewards of human existence are: (1) Dharma or religious merit, (2) Artha or material riches, (3) Kāma or sensuous enjoyment and (4) Mokṣa or release from the bondage of worldly existence.

† Vālmīki had been a hunter and a highway robber in his early life. He was reclaimed by the seven seers and eventually turned out a great seer and poet.

‡ We read in the *Bhāgavata* that Nārada was the son of a maid-servant in his previous incarnation and even as a child came in touch with holy men, who imparted him the highest wisdom and made him a real devotee by their very contact. In his next birth he appeared as a mind-born son of Brahmā.

§ Agastya was begotten of god Varuṇa through a pitcher. Another great sage, Vaśiṣṭha, was also born of the same pitcher. The association thus obtained in his embryonic state with a great sage made him equally great.

no other means either in the world or in the Vedas. Wisdom dawns not without association with saints and such association cannot be easily had. without the grace of Śrī Rāma. Contact with noble souls is the root of joy and blessings; it constitutes the very fruit and fulfilment of all endeavours, whereas all other practices are blossoms as it were. Through contact with the virtuous even the wicked get reformed, just as a base metal is transmuted by the touch of the philosopher's stone. On the other hand, if by mischance good men fall into evil company, they maintain their noble character like the gem on the hood of a serpent. Even the speech of deities like Brahmā, Visnu and Śiva, poets and men of wisdom falters in depicting the glory of pious souls. Much less can it be described by me, even as a dealer in vegetables finds himself incapable of expatiating on the qualities of gems.

(1—6)

दो०—बंदउँ संत समान चित हित अनहित नहिं कोइ ।
अंजलि गत सुभ सुमन जिमि सम सुगंध कर दोइ ॥ ३ (क) ॥
संत सरल चित जगत हित जानि सुभाउ सनेहु ।
बालबिनय सुनि करि कृपा राम चरन रति देहु ॥ ३ (ख) ॥

I bow to the saints, who are evenminded towards all and have no friend or foe, just as a flower of good quality placed in the palm of one's hands communicates its fragrance alike to both the hands (the one which plucked it and that which held and preserved it). Realizing thus the noble disposition and loving nature of saints, who are innocent at heart and catholic in spirit, I make this humble submission to them. Listening to my childlike prayer and taking compassion on me, O noble souls, bless me with devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma.

(3 A-B)

चौ०—बहुरि बंदि खल गन सतिभाएँ । जे बिनु काज दाहिनेहु बाएँ ॥
पर हित हानि लाभ जिन्ह केरें । उजरें हरष बिषाद बसेरें ॥ १ ॥
हरि हर जस ,राकेस राहु से । पर अकाज भट सहसबाहु से ॥
जे पर दोष लखहिं सहसाखी । पर हित घृत जिन्ह के मन माखी ॥ २ ॥
तेज कृसानु रोष महिषेसा । अघ अवगुन धन धनी धनेसा ॥
उदय केत सम हित सबही के । कुंभकरन सम सोवत नीके ॥ ३ ॥
पर अकाजु लगि तनु परिहरहीं । जिमि हिम उपल कृषी दलि गरहीं ॥
बंदउँ खल जस सेष सरोषा । सहस बदन बरनइ पर दोषा ॥ ४ ॥
पुनि प्रनवउँ पृथुराज समाना । पर अघ सुनइ सहस दस काना ॥
बहुरि सक्र सम बिनवउँ तेही । संतत सुरानीक हित जेही ॥ ५ ॥
बचन बज्र जेहि सदा पिआरा । सहस नयन पर दोष निहारा ॥ ६ ॥

Again, I greet with a sincere heart the malevolent class, who are hostile without purpose even to the friendly, to whom others' loss is their own gain, and who delight in others' desolation and wail over their prosperity. They try to eclipse the glory of Viṣṇu and Śiva even as the demon Rāhu intercepts

the light of the full moon (during what is known as the lunar eclipse); and they are valiant like the reputed King Sahasrabāhu* (so-called because of his possessing a thousand arms) in working others' woe. They detect others' faults as if with a thousand eyes and their (designing) mind mars others' interests even as a fly spoils clarified butter. In splendour they emulate the god of fire and in anger they vie with the god of death, who rides a buffalo. They are rich in crime and vice as Kubera, the god of riches, is in gold. Like the rise of a comet their advancement augurs ill for others' interests; like the slumber of Kumbhakarṇa † their decline alone is propitious for the world. They lay down their very life in order to be able to harm others, even as hail-stones dissolve after destroying the crop. I reverence a wicked soul as the fiery (thousand-tongued) serpent-god Śesa, in so far as he eagerly expatiates on others' faults with a thousand tongues as it were. Again, I bow to him as the celebrated King Pṛthu (who prayed for ten thousand ears in order to be able to hear the glories of the Lord to his heart's content) inasmuch as he hears of others' faults with ten thousand ears as it were. Once more do I supplicate to him as Indra (the lord of celestials) in so far as wine appears charming and beneficial to him (even as the army of gods is beneficent to Indra)‡. Harsh language is dear to him even as the thunderbolt is fondly cherished by Indra; and he detects others' faults with a thousand eyes as it were. (1—6)

दो०—उदासीन अरि मीत हित सुनत जरहिं खल रीति।
जानि पानि जुग जोरि जन बिनती करइ सप्रीति ॥ ४ ॥

The wicked burn with jealousy as they hear of others' welfare, be they his friends, foes or neutrals: such is their wont. Knowing thus, this humble soul makes loving entreaties to them with joined palms. (4)

चौ०—मैं अपनी दिसि कीन्ह निहोरा। तिन्ह निज ओर न लाउब भोरा॥
बायस पलिअहिं अति अनुरागा। होहिं निरामिष कबहुँ कि कागा॥ १॥
बंदउँ संत असज्जन चरना। दुखप्रद उभय बीच कछु बरना॥
बिछुरत एक प्रान हरि लेहीं। मिलत एक दुख दारुन देहीं॥ २॥
उपजहिं एक संग जग माहीं। जलज जोंक जिमि गुन बिलगाहीं॥
सुधा सुरा सम साधु असाधू। जनक एक जग जलधि अगाधू॥ ३॥
भल अनभल निज निज करतूती। लहत सुजस अपलोक बिभूती॥

* Sahasrabāhu was a mighty warrior and a contemporary of Rāvaṇa, who was once captured and held captive by him. He was slain by Paraśurāma.

† Kumbhakarṇa was a younger brother to Rāvaṇa, the demon-king of Lankā. He was a voracious eater and consumed a large number of goats and buffaloes every day. He kept awake for six months and slept during the other half-year. Living beings thus obtained a fresh lease of life during the period of his slumber.

‡ There is a pun on the expression 'Surānika' in the original. 'Surānika' (Sura+Anika) is a compound word in Sanskrit, meaning the army of the gods. In Hindi it can as well be treated as two separate words 'Surā' (wine) and 'Nika' (charming). Hence it has been interpreted both ways in the above rendering.

सुधा सुधाकर सुरसरि साधू । गरल अनल कलिमल सरि ब्याधू ॥ ४ ॥
गुन अवगुन जानत सब कोई । जो जेहि भाव नीक तेहि सोई ॥ ५ ॥

I for my part have made entreaties to them; they too must not fail to do their part. However fondly you may nurture a brood of crows, can you ever expect ravens to turn vegetarians? I adore the feet of a saint and a wicked soul, both of whom give pain, though some difference is said to exist between them. Whereas the former class cause mortal pain while parting, the latter give agonizing torment during their meeting. Though born together in the world, they differ in their traits even as the lotus and the leech (both of which spring from water). The good and the wicked resemble nectar and wine respectively; the unfathomable ocean in the form of this world is their common parent.* The good and the wicked gather a rich harvest of good reputation and infamy by their respective doings. Although the merits of nectar, the moon—the seat of nectar,—the Gangā—the river of the celestials—and a pious soul, on the one hand, and the demerits of venom, fire, the unholy river Karmanāśā—which is said to be full of the impurities of the Kali age—and the hunter, on the other, are known to all, only that which is to a man's taste appears good to him. (1–5)

दो०—भलो भलाइहि पै लहइ लहइ निचाइहि नीचु ।
सुधा सराहिअ अमरताँ गरल सराहिअ मीचु ॥ ५ ॥

Of course, a good man has a bias for goodness alone, while a vile person is prone to vileness. While nectar is praised for its immortalizing virtue, poison is extolled for its deadly effects. (5)

चौ०—खल अघ अगुन साधु गुन गाहा । उभय अपार उदधि अवगाहा ॥
तेहि तें कछु गुन दोष बखाने । संग्रह त्याग न बिनु पहिचाने ॥ १ ॥
भलेउ पोच सब बिधि उपजाए । गनि गुन दोष बेद बिलगाए ॥
कहहिं बेद इतिहास पुराना । बिधि प्रपंचु गुन अवगुन साना ॥ २ ॥
दुख सुख पाप पुन्य दिन राती । साधु असाधु सुजाति कुजाती ॥
दानव देव ऊँच अरु नीचू । अमिअ सुजीवनु माहुरु मीचू ॥ ३ ॥
माया ब्रह्म जीव जगदीसा । लच्छि अलच्छि रंक अवनीसा ॥
कासी मग सुरसरि क्रमनासा । मरु मारव महिदेव गवासा ॥ ४ ॥
सरग नरक अनुराग बिरागा । निगमागम गुन दोष बिभागा ॥ ५ ॥

The tales of sins and vices of the wicked, on the one hand, and of the virtues of the virtuous, on the other, are like boundless and unfathomable oceans. That is why I have enumerated only a few virtues and vices; for they cannot be acquired or discarded without being duly distinguished. The good as well as the vile, all have been brought into being by the Creator; it is the Vedas that have differentiated them by reckoning the merits of the former class and the demerits of the other. The Vedas, the Itihāsas (such as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and

---

* In the Purāṇas we read how both nectar and wine were churned out of the ocean of milk by the joint efforts of the gods and the demons.

the *Mahābhārata*) and the Purāṇas unanimously declare that the creation of Brahmā (the Creator) is an intermixture of good and evil. It is characterized by pairs of opposites such as pain and pleasure, sin and merit, day and night, the good and the wicked, good birth and vile birth, demons and gods, the high and the low, nectar and poison, a happy life and death, Māyā and Brahma, *i.e.*, Matter and Spirit, the soul and God (the Lord of the universe), plenty and poverty, the pauper and the king, the sacred Kāśī or Banaras and Magadh or North Bihar (the accursed land), the holy Gaṅgā—the river of the celestials—and the unholy Karmanāśā* (in Bihar), the desert land of Marwar (Western Rajputana and Sind) and the rich soil of Malwa, the Brahman—who is a veritable god on earth—and the barbarian who feeds on the cow, heaven and hell, attachment and dispassion. The Vedas and other sacred books have sifted good from evil. (1–5)

दो०—जड़ चेतन गुन दोषमय बिस्व कीन्ह करतार ।
संत हंस गुन गहहिं पय परिहरि बारि बिकार ॥ ६ ॥

God has created the universe consisting of animate and inanimate beings as partaking of both good and evil; swans† in the form of saints imbibe the milk of goodness, rejecting water in the form of evil. (6)

चौ०—अस बिबेक जब देइ बिधाता । तब तजि दोष गुनहिं मनु राता ॥
काल सुभाउ करम बरिआईं । भलेउ प्रकृति बस चुकइ भलाईं ॥ १ ॥
सो सुधारि हरिजन जिमि लेहीं । दलि दुख दोष बिमल जसु देहीं ॥
खलउ करहिं भल पाइ सुसंगू । मिटइ न मलिन सुभाउ अभंगू ॥ २ ॥
लखि सुबेष जग बंचक जेऊ । बेष प्रताप पूजिअहिं तेऊ ॥
उघरहिं अंत न होइ निबाहू । कालनेमि जिमि रावन राहू ॥ ३ ॥
किएहुँ कुबेषु साधु सनमानू । जिमि जग जामवंत हनुमानू ॥
हानि कुसंग सुसंगति लाहू । लोकहुँ बेद बिदित सब काहू ॥ ४ ॥
गगन चढ़इ रज पवन प्रसंगा । कीचहिं मिलइ नीच जल संगा ॥
साधु असाधु सदन सुक सारीं । सुमिरहिं राम देहिं गनि गारीं ॥ ५ ॥
धूम कुसंगति कारिख होई । लिखिअ पुरान मंजु मसि सोई ॥
सोइ जल अनल अनिल संघाता । होइ जलद जग जीवन दाता ॥ ६ ॥

When Providence blesses one with such discrimination (as is possessed by the swan), then alone does the mind abandon evil and gets enamoured of goodness. By force of the spirit of the times, old habits and past Karma even the good deviate from goodness under the influence of Māyā. But just as servants of Śrī Hari rectify that error and, eradicating sorrow and weakness, bring untarnished glory to them, even so the wicked occasionally perform a noble deed due to their good association, although their evil nature,

---

* A river of sinful origin in Bihar, a plunge in whose waters is said to destroy one's religious merits. Hence it is called Karmanāśā (that which neutralizes one's meritorious acts).

† The swan is traditionally believed to feed on pearls and credited with the natural gift of separating milk from water.

which is unchangeable, cannot be obliterated. Even those who are impostors are respected on account of their garb, as the world is taken in by their attractive appearance. But they are eventually exposed, and cannot keep up their false appearance till the end, as was the case with Kālanemi*, Rāvaṇa† and Rāhu‡. The good are honoured notwithstanding their mean appearance, even as Jāmbavān (a general of Sugrīva's army, who was endowed with the form of a bear and possessed miraculous strength) and Hanumān (the monkey-god) won honour in this world. Bad association is harmful, while good company is an asset in itself: this is true in the world as well as in the eyes of the Vedas, and is known to all. Through contact with the wind dust ascends to the sky, while it is assimilated with mud when united with low-lying waters. Parrots and Mainās nurtured in the house of the virtuous and the wicked repeat the name of Rāma and pour a volley of abuses respectively. Smoke coming in contact with an evil (earthy)§ substance turns into soot; the same is used as a material for copying the Purāṇas with when converted into beautiful ink. Again, in conjunction with water, fire and air it is transformed into a cloud and brings life to the world. (1—6)

दो०—ग्रह भेषज जल पवन पट पाइ कुजोग सुजोग ।
होहिं कुबस्तु सुबस्तु जग लखहिं सुलच्छन लोग ॥ ७ (क) ॥
सम प्रकास तम पाख दुहुँ नाम भेद बिधि कीन्ह ।
ससि सोषक पोषक समुझि जग जस अपजस दीन्ह ॥ ७ (ख) ॥
जड़ चेतन जग जीव जत सकल राममय जानि ।
बंदउँ सब के पद कमल सदा जोरि जुग पानि ॥ ७ (ग) ॥
देव दनुज नर नाग खग प्रेत पितर गंधर्ब ।
बंदउँ किंनर रजनिचर कृपा करहु अब सर्ब ॥ ७ (घ) ॥

---

* Kālanemi was a demon chief, who was a contemporary of Rāvaṇa, the mighty king of Lankā. In the *Lankā-Kāṇḍa* (Book VI. 56-58) of this very work we are told how he assumed the false appearance of an ascetic and tried to deceive Hanumān, the devoted servant of the divine Śrī Rāma, but was ultimately detected and killed by Hanumān.

† We read in the *Araṇyakāṇḍa* (Book III. 27. 4-7) how Rāvaṇa appeared before Sītā in the garb of a mendicant but could not keep up his false appearance for long and had to throw off his mask at last.

‡ In the Purāṇas we are told how at the beginning of creation nectar was churned out of the ocean of milk conjointly by the gods and the demons. When the same was being served to the gods by God Viṣṇu Himself (who had assumed the form of a charming damsel in order to put the demons off the scent), the demon Rāhu disguised himself as a god and took his seat in the celestial row to participate in the feast. He was, however, soon detected by the sun-god and the moon-god, who exposed his real character.

§ There is a pun on the compound word 'Kusangati' in the original. 'Ku' is both a noun and an indeclinable prefixed to nouns. As an indeclinable it means bad or evil, while as a noun it is a synonym for the earth. Here it is used in both the senses and has been translated accordingly.

The planets, medicines, water, air and cloth prove good or bad in the world according to their good or evil associations; only men endowed with a keen insight are able to know this. The proportion of moonlight and darkness is the same in the bright as well as in the dark fortnight; only the two have been named differently by the Creator. Knowing the one as the nourisher and the other as the emaciator of the moon, the world has given it a good name and a bad one. Whatever beings, animate or inanimate, there are in the universe, recognizing them, one and all, as consisting of Śrī Rāma, I ever adore the lotus-feet of all with joined palms. I reverence gods, demons, human beings, Nāgas, birds, spirits, manes (the souls of departed ancestors) and Gandharvas, Kinnaras and Rākṣasas (giants).* Pray be gracious to me all on this occasion. (7 A—D)

चौ०—आकर चारि लाख चौरासी । जाति जीव जल थल नभ बासी ॥
सीय राममय सब जग जानी । करउँ प्रनाम जोरि जुग पानी ॥ १ ॥
जानि कृपाकर किंकर मोहू । सब मिलि करहु छाड़ि छल छोहू ॥
निज बुधि बल भरोस मोहि नाहीं । तातें बिनय करउँ सब पाहीं ॥ २ ॥
करन चहउँ रघुपति गुन गाहा । लघु मति मोरि चरित अवगाहा ॥
सूझ न एकउ अंग उपाऊ । मन मति रंक मनोरथ राऊ ॥ ३ ॥
मति अति नीच ऊँचि रुचि आछी । चहिअ अमिअ जग जुरइ न छाछी ॥
छमिहहिं सज्जन मोरि ढिठाई । सुनिहहिं बालबचन मन लाई ॥ ४ ॥
जौं बालक कह तोतरि बाता । सुनहिं मुदित मन पितु अरु माता ॥
हँसिहहिं कूर कुटिल कुबिचारी । जे पर दूषन भूषनधारी ॥ ५ ॥
निज कबित्त केहि लाग न नीका । सरस होउ अथवा अति फीका ॥
जे पर भनिति सुनत हरषाहीं । ते बर पुरुष बहुत जग नाहीं ॥ ६ ॥
जग बहु नर सर सरि सम भाई । जे निज बाढ़ि बढ़हिं जल पाई ॥
सज्जन सकृत सिंधु सम कोई । देखि पूर बिधु बाढ़इ जोई ॥ ७ ॥

Eight million and four hundred thousand † species of living beings, classified under four broad divisions, inhabit land, water and the air. Recognizing the entire creation as full of Sītā and Rāma, I make obeisance to them with joined palms. Knowing me as your servant, be genuinely gracious to me all of you, O mines of compassion. I have no confidence in my intellectual power, hence I supplicate you all. I would recount the virtues of the Lord of Raghus, ‡ Śrī Rāma; but my wits are poor, whereas the exploits of Śrī Rāma

* Gandharvas, Kinnaras and Rākṣasas are different species of superhuman beings. Of these the Gandharvas are celestial songsters and are specially noted for their handsome appearance; while the Kinnaras are credited with the head of a horse. The Rākṣasas are monstrous in appearance and are said to roam at night and feed on the human flesh. The Nāgas are another class of semi-divine beings, who, though resembling serpents in shape, can take the human form at will.

† The number of species of living beings has been categorically fixed in Hindu scriptures as eighty-four lakhs. The four broad divisions are: (1) Jarāyuja (viviparous, such as men and beasts), (2) Aṇḍaja (oviparous), (3) Swedaja (born of sweat, such as lice, bugs etc.) and (4) Udbhijja (sprouting from the soil, viz. plants).

‡ King Raghu was a forbear of Śrī Rāma. His descendants bore the name of Raghus. Having been the head of the clan after His father, Daśaratha, He is aptly called the Lord of the Raghus.

are unfathomable. For this I find not the least resources; while I am bankrupt of mind and intellect, my ambition is right royal. Even though my intellect is exceedingly mean, my aspiration is pitched too high; while I crave for nectar, I have no means in this world to procure even butter-milk. The virtuous will forgive my presumption and listen to my childish babbling with interest. When a child prattles in lisping accents, the parents hear it with a mind full of delight. Those, however, who are hard-hearted, mischievous and perverse and cherish others' faults as an ornament, will feel amused. Who does not like one's own poetry, be it delightful or exceedingly insipid ? Such good people as delight to hear others' composition are rare in this world. The world abounds in men who resemble lakes and rivers, that get swollen with their own rise when waters are added to them. There is some rare good soul like the ocean, which swells at the sight of the full moon. (1—7)

दो०—भाग छोट अभिलाषु बड़ करउँ एक बिस्वास।
पैहहिं सुख सुनि सुजन सब खल करिहहिं उपहास ॥ ८ ॥

Humble is my lot and my ambition high; my only hope is that all good men will be gratified to hear what I say, while the evil-minded will laugh. (8)

चौ०—खल परिहास होइ हित मोरा। काक कहहिं कलकंठ कठोरा ॥
हंसहि बक दादुर चातकही। हँसहिं मलिन खल बिमल बतकही ॥ १ ॥
कबित रसिक न राम पद नेहू। तिन्ह कहँ सुखद हास रस एहू ॥
भाषा भनिति भोरि मति मोरी। हँसिबे जोग हँसें नहिं खोरी ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु पद प्रीति न सामुझि नीकी। तिन्हहि कथा सुनि लागिहि फीकी ॥
हरि हर पद रति मति न कुतरकी। तिन्ह कहुँ मधुर कथा रघुबर की ॥ ३ ॥
राम भगति भूषित जियँ जानी। सुनिहहिं सुजन सराहि सुबानी ॥
कबि न होउँ नहिं बचन प्रबीनू। सकल कला सब बिद्या हीनू ॥ ४ ॥
आखर अरथ अलंकृति नाना। छंद प्रबंध अनेक बिधाना ॥
भाव भेद रस भेद अपारा। कबित दोष गुन बिबिध प्रकारा ॥ ५ ॥
कबित बिबेक एक नहिं मोरें। सत्य कहउँ लिखि कागद कोरें ॥ ६ ॥

The laughter of the evil-minded will benefit me; crows call the cuckoo hoarse. Herons ridicule the swan, frogs make fun of the *Chātaka* bird and malicious rogues deride refined speech. To those who have no taste for poetry nor devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma, this undertaking of mine will serve as a subject for delightful mirth. My composition is couched in the popular dialect and my intellect is feeble; hence it is a fit subject for ridicule, and those who laugh shall not incur any blame. To those who cherish no love for the feet of the Lord and have no sound reason either, this story will sound unattractive to the ears. To those, however, who possess devotion to the feet of Gods Viṣṇu and Śiva and whose mind is not perverse, the tale of the Chief of the Raghus will taste as sweet. Knowing it in their heart as adorned with devotion to Śrī Rāma, the virtuous will listen to it with bland words of praise. I am no poet nor an adept in the art of speech and am a cipher in all arts and sciences. There are elegant devices of letters, subtleties of meaning, various figures of speech, metrical compositions of different kinds, infinite

varieties of emotions and sentiments and multifarious flaws and excellences of poetic composition. Of these details of poesy, I possess critical knowledge of none. I vouch for it in writing on a blank sheet. (1–6)

दो०—भनिति मोरि सब गुन रहित बिस्व बिदित गुन एक।
सो बिचारि सुनिहहिं सुमति जिन्ह कें बिमल बिबेक ॥ ९ ॥

My composition is devoid of all charm; it has only one merit, which is known throughout the world. Recognizing this merit, men of sound reason, who are gifted with unbiased judgment, will surely hear it. (9)

चौ०—एहि महँ रघुपति नाम उदारा। अति पावन पुरान श्रुति सारा ॥
मंगल भवन अमंगल हारी। उमा सहित जेहि जपत पुरारी ॥ १ ॥
भनिति बिचित्र सुकबि कृत जोऊ। राम नाम बिनु सोह न सोऊ ॥
बिधुबदनी सब भाँति सँवारी। सोह न बसन बिना बर नारी ॥ २ ॥
सब गुन रहित कुकबि कृत बानी। राम नाम जस अंकित जानी ॥
सादर कहहिं सुनहिं बुध ताही। मधुकर सरिस संत गुनग्राही ॥ ३ ॥
जदपि कबित रस एकउ नाहीं। राम प्रताप प्रगट एहि माहीं ॥
सोइ भरोस मोरें मन आवा। केहिं न सुसंग बड़प्पनु पावा ॥ ४ ॥
धूमउ तजइ सहज करुआई। अगरु प्रसंग सुगंध बसाई ॥
भनिति भदेस बस्तु भलि बरनी। राम कथा जग मंगल करनी ॥ ५ ॥

It contains the gracious name of the Lord of Raghus, which is exceedingly holy and the very cream of the Purāṇas and the Vedas. It is the abode of blessings and the remover of evils, and is muttered by Lord Śiva, the enemy of the demon Tripura, along with his consort, Umā. Even a composition of marvellous beauty and written by a gifted poet does not commend itself without the name of Śrī Rāma. A pretty woman with a charming countenance and fully adorned does not look attractive when undressed. On the other hand, the wise recite and hear with admiration even the composition of a worthless poet, which is devoid of all merit, knowing it as adorned with the name and glory of Śrī Rāma; for, like the bee, saints have a bias for goodness. Although it has no poetic charm whatsoever, the glory of Śrī Rāma is manifest in it. This is the only hope which flashes on my mind; who has not been exalted by noble company? Even smoke rising from burning aloe wood is impregnated with the latter's fragrance and gives up its natural pungency. Although my composition is clumsy, it treats of a commendable theme, viz., the story of Śrī Rāma, which brings felicity to the world. (1–5)

छं०—मंगल करनि कलि मल हरनि तुलसी कथा रघुनाथ की।
गति कूर कबिता सरित की ज्यों सरित पावन पाथ की ॥
प्रभु सुजस संगति भनिति भलि होइहि सुजन मन भावनी।
भव अंग भूति मसान की सुमिरत सुहावनि पावनी ॥

The tale of the Lord of Raghus, O Tulasīdāsa, brings forth blessings and wipes away the impurities of the Kali age. The course of this stream of my

poetry is tortuous like that of the holy Gangā. By its association with the auspicious glory of the Lord my composition will be blessed and will captivate the mind of the virtuous. On the person of Lord Śiva, even the ashes of the cremation-ground appear charming and purify by their very thought.

दो०—प्रिय लागिहि अति सबहि मम भनिति राम जस संग ।
दारु बिचारु कि करइ कोउ बंदिअ मलय प्रसंग ॥ १० (क) ॥
स्याम सुरभि पय बिसद अति गुनद करहिं सब पान ।
गिरा ग्राम्य सिय राम जस गावहिं सुनहिं सुजान ॥ १० (ख) ॥

My composition will appear extremely delightful to all by its association with the glory of Śrī Rāma, even as timber of every description is transformed into sandal and becomes worthy of adoration by contact with the Malaya mountain (in south India), and nobody takes into account the quality of wood in that region. The milk of even a dark cow is white and possesses a great medicinal value and is drunk by all. So do the wise chant and hear the glory of Sītā and Rāma even though couched in the vulgar tongue. (10 A-B)

चौ०—मनि मानिक मुकुता छबि जैसी । अहि गिरि गज सिर सोह न तैसी ॥
नृप किरीट तरुनी तनु पाई । लहहिं सकल सोभा अधिकाई ॥ १ ॥
तैसेहिं सुकबि कबित बुध कहहीं । उपजहिं अनत अनत छबि लहहीं ॥
भगति हेतु बिधि भवन बिहाई । सुमिरत सारद आवति धाई ॥ २ ॥
राम चरित सर बिनु अन्हवाएँ । सो श्रम जाइ न कोटि उपाएँ ॥
कबि कोबिद अस हृदयँ बिचारी । गावहिं हरि जस कलि मल हारी ॥ ३ ॥
कीन्हें प्राकृत जन गुन गाना । सिर धुनि गिरा लगत पछिताना ॥
हृदय सिंधु मति सीप समाना । स्वाति सारदा कहहिं सुजाना ॥ ४ ॥
जौं बरषइ बर बारि बिचारू । होहिं कबित मुकुतामनि चारू ॥ ५ ॥

The beauty of a gem, a ruby and a pearl does not catch the eye as it should so long as they are borne on the head of a serpent, the top of a mountain and the crown of an elephant respectively. The charm of them all is enhanced when they adorn the diadem of a king or the person of a young lady. Even so, the wise say, the outpourings of a good poet originate at one place (in the poet's own mind) and exercise their charm elsewhere (on the mind of the admirer). Attracted by his devotion, Saraswatī (the goddess of poetry) comes with all speed from the abode of Brahmā (the topmost heaven) at his very invocation. The fatigue occasioned by this long journey cannot be relieved by millions of devices unless she takes a dip in the lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits. Realizing this in their heart, poets and wise men chant the glory of Śrī Hari alone, which wipes away the impurities of the Kali age. Finding the bard singing the glories of worldly men the goddess of speech begins to beat her breast and repent. The wise liken the heart of a poet to the sea, his intellect to the shell containing pearls and goddess Saraswatī to the star called Swāti (the modern Arcturus, the fifteenth lunar asterism considered as favourable to the formation of pearls). If there is a shower in the form of beautiful ideas, lovely pearls make their appearance in the form of poetic effusions

(1—5)

दो०—जुगुति बेधि पुनि पोहिअहिं राम चरित बर ताग ।
पहिरहिं सज्जन बिमल उर सोभा अति अनुराग ॥ ११ ॥

If those pearls are pierced with skill and strung together on the beautiful thread of Śrī Rāma's exploits, and if noble souls wear them in their innocent heart, grace in the form of excessive fondness is the result. (11)

चौ०—जे जनमे कलि काल कराला । करतब बायस बेष मराला ॥
चलत कुपंथ बेद मग छाँड़े । कपट कलेवर कलि मल भाँड़े ॥ १ ॥
बंचक भगत कहाइ राम के । किंकर कंचन कोह काम के ॥
तिन्ह महँ प्रथम रेख जग मोरी । धींग धरमध्वज धंधक धोरी ॥ २ ॥
जौं अपने अवगुन सब कहऊँ । बाढ़इ कथा पार नहिं लहऊँ ॥
ताते मैं अति अलप बखाने । थोरे महुँ जानिहहिं सयाने ॥ ३ ॥
समुझि बिबिधि बिधि बिनती मोरी । कोउ न कथा सुनि देइहि खोरी ॥
एतेहु पर करिहहिं जे असंका । मोहि ते अधिक ते जड़ मति रंका ॥ ४ ॥
कबि न होउँ नहिं चतुर कहावउँ । मति अनुरूप राम गुन गावउँ ॥
कहँ रघुपति के चरित अपारा । कहँ मति मोरि निरत संसारा ॥ ५ ॥
जेहिं मारुत गिरि मेरु उड़ाहीं । कहहु तूल केहि लेखे माहीं ॥
समुझत अमित राम प्रभुताई । करत कथा मन अति कदराई ॥ ६ ॥

Those who are born in this terrible age of Kali, who though akin to the crow in their doings have put on the garb of a swan, who tread the evil path, abandoning the track of the Vedas, who are embodiments of falsehood and repositories of sins of the Kali age, who are impostors claiming to be devotees of Śrī Rāma, though slaves of mammon, anger and passion, and who are unscrupulous, hypocritical and foremost among intriguers,—I occupy the first place among them. Were I to recount all my vices, their tale will assume large dimensions, and yet I shall not be able to exhaust them. Hence I have mentioned very few. A word should suffice for the wise. Entering into the spirit of my manifold prayers, none should blame me on hearing this story. Those who will raise objections even then are more stupid and deficient in intellect than myself. I am no poet and have no pretensions to ingenuity; I sing the glories of Śrī Rāma according to my own lights. My intellect, which wallows in the world, is a poor match for the unlimited exploits of the Lord of Raghus. Tell me, of what account is cotton in the face of the strong wind before which even mountains like Meru are blown away ? Realizing the infinite glory of Śrī Rāma, my mind feels very diffident in proceeding with this story. (1—6)

दो०—सारद सेस महेस बिधि आगम निगम पुरान ।
नेति नेति कहि जासु गुन करहिं निरंतर गान ॥ १२ ॥

Goddess Saraswatī, Śeṣa (the thousand-headed serpent-god), the great Lord Śiva, Brahmā (the Creator), the Āgamas (Tantras), the Vedas and the Purāṇas unceasingly sing His virtues, saying 'not that', 'not that'.* (12)

* This shows that the gods and scriptures mentioned above, though ever engaged in singing the virtues of Śrī Rāma, are able only to touch the fringe of His glory and find themselves unable to describe it in full. That is why they make only a negative assertion 'Na iti' (not that), meaning

चौ०—सब जानत प्रभु प्रभुता सोई । तदपि कहें बिनु रहा न कोई ॥
तहाँ बेद अस कारन राखा । भजन प्रभाउ भाँति बहु भाषा ॥ १ ॥
एक अनीह अरूप अनामा । अज सच्चिदानंद पर धामा ॥
ब्यापक बिस्वरूप भगवाना । तेहिं धरि देह चरित कृत नाना ॥ २ ॥
सो केवल भगतन हित लागी । परम कृपाल प्रनत अनुरागी ॥
जेहि जन पर ममता अति छोहू । जेहिं करुना करि कीन्ह न कोहू ॥ ३ ॥
गई बहोर गरीब नेवाजू । सरल सबल साहिब रघुराजू ॥
बुध बरनहिं हरि जस अस जानी । करहिं पुनीत सुफल निज बानी ॥ ४ ॥
तेहिं बल मैं रघुपति गुन गाथा । कहिहउँ नाइ राम पद माथा ॥
मुनिन्ह प्रथम हरि कीरति गाई । तेहिं मग चलत सुगम मोहि भाई ॥ ५ ॥

Though all know the Lord's greatness as such, yet none has refrained from describing it. The Vedas have justified it thus: they have variously sung the glory of remembering the Lord. God, who is one, desireless, formless, nameless and unborn, who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss, who is supreme effulgence, all-pervading and all-formed,—it is He who has performed many deeds assuming a suitable form. That He has done only for the good of His devotees; for He is supremely gracious and loving to the suppliant. He is excessively fond of His devotees and treats them as His own; He has never frowned at him to whom He has once shown His favour. The restorer of what has been lost, the befriender of the poor, the Lord of Raghus is a straightforward and powerful master. Knowing thus, the wise sing the glory of Śrī Hari and thereby hallow and bring supreme reward to their speech. It is on this strength (the supreme efficacy of remembering the Lord and the potency of His grace) that I shall sing the virtues of the Lord of Raghus, bowing my head to the feet of Śrī Rāma. Sages have sung the glory of Śrī Hari in the past; it will be easy for me to follow that very path. (1—5)

दो०—अति अपार जे सरित बर जौं नृप सेतु कराहिं ।
चढ़ि पिपीलिकउ परम लघु बिनु श्रम पारहि जाहिं ॥ १३ ॥

If kings get bridges constructed over big rivers, which are too broad, even the tiniest ants cross them without exertion. (13)

चौ०—एहि प्रकार बल मनहि देखाई । करिहउँ रघुपति कथा सुहाई ॥
ब्यास आदि कबि पुंगव नाना । जिन्ह सादर हरि सुजस बखाना ॥ १ ॥
चरन कमल बंदउँ तिन्ह केरे । पुरवहुँ सकल मनोरथ मेरे ॥
कलि के कबिन्ह करउँ परनामा । जिन्ह बरने रघुपति गुन ग्रामा ॥ २ ॥
जे प्राकृत कबि परम सयाने । भाषाँ जिन्ह हरि चरित बखाने ॥
भए जे अहहिं जे होइहहिं आगें । प्रनवउँ सबहि कपट सब त्यागें ॥ ३ ॥
होहु प्रसन्न देहु बरदानू । साधु समाज भनिति सनमानू ॥
जो प्रबंध बुध नहिं आदरहीं । सो श्रम बादि बाल कबि करहीं ॥ ४ ॥

---

thereby that whatever is predicated of God falls much too short of His real glory and is at best only a faint indication of it.

कीरति भनिति भूति भलि सोई । सुरसरि सम सब कहँ हित होई ॥
राम सुकीरति भनिति भदेसा । असमंजस अस मोहि अँदेसा ॥ ५ ॥
तुम्हरी कृपाँ सुलभ सोउ मोरे । सिअनि सुहावनि टाट पटोरे ॥ ६ ॥

Reassuring the mind in this way, I shall narrate the charming story of the Lord of Raghus. Vyāsa and various other top-ranking poets, who have reverently recounted the blessed glory of Śrī Hari, I bow to the lotus feet of them all; let them fulfil all my desires. I make obeisance to the bards of the Kali age, who have sung the multitudinous virtues of the Lord of Raghus. Even those poets of supreme wisdom who belong to the Prākṛta or popular class (as opposed to the Sanskrit or the cultured class), who have narrated the exploits of Śrī Hari in the spoken language, including those who have flourished in the past, those who are still living and those who are yet to come, I reverence them, one and all, renouncing all false appearance. Be propitious and grant this boon that my song may be honoured in the assemblage of pious souls. A composition which the wise refuse to honour is fruitless labour which only silly poets undertake. Of glory, poetry and affluence that alone is blessed which, like the celestial river (Gangā), is conducive to the good of all. The glory of Śrī Rāma is charming indeed, while my speech is rough. This is something incongruous, I am afraid. By your grace, even this incongruity will turn out well for me; embroidery of silk looks charming even on coarse cloth. (1—6)

दो०—सरल कबित कीरति बिमल सोइ आदरहिं सुजान ।
सहज बयर बिसराइ रिपु जो सुनि करहिं बखान ॥ १४ (क) ॥
सो न होइ बिनु बिमल मति मोहि मति बल अति थोर ।
करहु कृपा हरि जस कहउँ पुनि पुनि करउँ निहोर ॥ १४ (ख) ॥
कबि कोबिद रघुबर चरित मानस मंजु मराल ।
बालबिनय सुनि सुरुचि लखि मो पर होहु कृपाल ॥ १४ (ग) ॥

The wise admire only that poetry which is lucid and portrays a spotless character and which even opponents hear with applause forgetting natural animosity. Such poetry is not possible without a refined intellect, and of intellectual power I have very little. Be gracious, therefore, so that I may depict the glory of Śrī Hari: I solicit again and again. Poets and wise men, lovely swans sporting in the Mansarovar lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits! hearing my childlike prayer and recognizing my refined taste, be kindly disposed towards me. (14 A-C)

सो०—बंदउँ मुनि पद कंजु रामायन जेहिं निरमयउ ।
सखर सुकोमल मंजु दोष रहित दूषन सहित ॥ १४ (घ) ॥
बंदउँ चारिउ बेद भव बारिधि बोहित सरिस ।
जिन्हहि न सपनेहुँ खेद बरनत रघुबर बिसद जसु ॥ १४ (ङ) ॥

बंदउँ बिधि पद रेनु भव सागर जेंहिं कीन्ह जहँ ।
संत सुधा ससि धेनु प्रगटे खल बिष बारुनी ॥ १४ (च) ॥
दो०—बिबुध बिप्र बुध ग्रह चरन बंदि कहउँ कर जोरि ।
होइ प्रसन्न पुरवहु सकल मंजु मनोरथ मोरि ॥ १४ (छ) ॥

I bow to the lotus feet of the sage (Vālmīki) who composed the Rāmāyaṇa, which, though containing an account of the demon Khara (a cousin of Rāvaṇa), is yet very soft and charming, and though faultless, is yet full of references to Dūṣaṇa (another cousin of the demon-king Rāvana)*. I reverence all the four Vedas, barks as it were on the ocean of mundane existence, which never dream of weariness in singing the untarnished glory of Śrī Rāma, the Chief of Raghus. I greet the dust on the feet of Brahmā (the Creator), who has evolved the ocean of worldly existence, the birth-place of nectar, the moon and the cow of plenty in the form of saints, on the one hand, and of poison and wine in the form of the wicked, on the other.† Making obeisance to the feet of gods, the Brahmans, wise men and the deities presiding over the nine planets, I pray to them with joined palms! Be pleased to accomplish all my fair desires. (14 D–G)

चौ०—पुनि बंदउँ सारद सुरसरिता । जुगल पुनीत मनोहर चरिता ॥
मज्जन पान पाप हर एका । कहत सुनत एक हर अबिबेका ॥ १ ॥
गुर पितु मातु महेस भवानी । प्रनवउँ दीनबंधु दिन दानी ॥
सेवक स्वामि सखा सिय पी के । हित निरुपधि सब बिधि तुलसी के ॥ २ ॥
कलि बिलोकि जग हित हर गिरिजा । साबर मंत्र जाल जिन्ह सिरिजा ॥
अनमिल आखर अरथ न जापू । प्रगट प्रभाउ महेस प्रतापू ॥ ३ ॥
सो उमेस मोहि पर अनुकूला । करिहिं कथा मुद मंगल मूला ॥
सुमिरि सिवा सिव पाइ पसाऊ । बरनउँ राम चरित चित चाऊ ॥ ४ ॥
भनिति मोरि सिव कृपाँ बिभाती । ससि समाज मिलि मनहुँ सुराती ॥
जे एहि कथहि सनेह समेता । कहिहहिं सुनिहहिं समुझि सचेता ॥ ५ ॥
होइहहिं राम चरन अनुरागी । कलि मल रहित सुमंगल भागी ॥ ६ ॥

* There is a pun on the words 'Sakhara' and 'Dūṣaṇasahita' in the original, which are capable of a twofold interpretation. 'Khara' and 'Dūṣaṇa' as proper nouns denote two of Rāvaṇa's cousins, who figure in the *Araṇyakāṇḍa* of the great epic poem of Vālmīki and lead a military expedition against Śrī Rāma in order to avenge themselves of the insult offered to their sister, Śūrpaṇakhā, by Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma's younger brother. They are eventually killed by Śrī Rāma, who proves too strong for the redoubtable demon chiefs. 'Khara' also means sharp-edged or hard and is thus contrasted with 'Sukomala' (soft). Similarly, 'Dūṣaṇa' also means a fault and thus the poet exposes himself to a contradiction in terms when he calls the *Rāmāyaṇa* both 'Doṣarahita' (faultless) and 'Duṣaṇasahita' (full of faults). The contradiction, however, is only verbal in both cases and constitutes a figure of speech known by the name 'Virodha' or 'Virodhābhāsa'.

† This has an indirect reference to the churning of the ocean of milk as described in the Purāṇas, by the joint labours of gods and demons at the beginning of creation, which yielded beneficent objects like nectar, the moon and the cow of plenty, on the one hand, and pernicious substances like poison and wine on the other.

Again, I bow to goddess Saraswatī and the celestial river Gangā, both of whom are holy and perform agreeable roles. The one (Gangā) wipes away sin through immersion and draught; the other (Saraswatī) dispels ignorance through the recital and hearing of her glory. I adore the great Lord Śiva and His consort, Goddess Bhavānī (Pārvatī), my preceptors and parents, friends of the forlorn and ever given to charity, servants, masters and friends of Sītā's lord, and true benefactors of Tulasīdāsa in every way. Seeing the prevalence of the Kali age Hara and Girija (Śiva and Pārvatī) evolved a string of spells in the tongue of savages, incoherent syllables which yield no interpretation and require no repetition, but whose efficacy is patent, revealing Śiva's glory. That Lord of Umā (Pārvatī), favourable as He is to me, shall make this story of mine a source of blessings and joy. Thus invoking Lord Śiva and His Consort, Śivā (Pārvatī), and obtaining Their favour, I relate the exploits of Śrī Rāma with a heart full of ardour. By Śiva's grace my composition will shed its lustre even as a night shines in conjunction with the moon and the stars. Those who will fondly and intelligently recite or hear this story with attention will develop devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma and, purged of the impurities of Kali, will obtain choice blessings. (1—6)

दो०—सपनेहुँ साचेहुँ मोहि पर जौं हर गौरि पसाउ।
तौ फुर होउ जो कहेउँ सब भाषा भनिति प्रभाउ ॥ १५ ॥

If Hara and Gaurī (Lord Śiva and Pārvatī) are really propitious to me, even in dream, let all that I have said in glorification of this poetry of mine, written in a popular dialect, come out true. (15)

चौ०—बंदउँ अवध पुरी अति पावनि। सरजू सरि कलि कलुष नसावनि॥
प्रनवउँ पुर नर नारि बहोरी। ममता जिन्ह पर प्रभुहि न थोरी॥ १ ॥
सिय निंदक अघ ओघ नसाए। लोक बिसोक बनाइ बसाए॥
बंदउँ कौसल्या दिसि प्राची। कीरति जासु सकल जग माची॥ २ ॥
प्रगटेउ जहँ रघुपति ससि चारू। बिस्व सुखद खल कमल तुसारू॥
दसरथ राउ सहित सब रानी। सुकृत सुमंगल मूरति मानी॥ ३ ॥
करउँ प्रनाम करम मन बानी। करहु कृपा सुत सेवक जानी॥
जिन्हहि बिरचि बड़ भयउ बिधाता। महिमा अवधि राम पितु माता॥ ४ ॥

I reverence the exceedingly holy city of Ayodhyā (Śrī Rāma's birthplace) and the river Sarayū (flowing beside it), which wipes out the sins of the Kali age. Again, I bow to the men and women of the city, who enjoy the affection of the Lord in no small degree. Even though they were damned as a result of the heap of sins incurred by the calumniators of Sītā (who were instrumental in bringing about Her lifelong exile), they were lodged in a heavenly abode, having been divested of sorrow. I greet Kausalyā (the eldest queen of King Daśaratha) whose glory stands diffused throughout the world. She is the eastern horizon whence arose the lovely moon in the shape of the Lord of Raghus, who affords delight to the entire universe and is blighting as frost to lotuses in the form of the wicked. Recognizing King Daśaratha together with all his consorts as incarnations of merit and fair blessings, I make obeisance to them in thought, word and deed. Knowing me as a servant

of your son, be gracious to me. The father and mothers of Śrī Rāma are the very perfection of glory, by creating whom even Brahmā (the Creator) has exalted himself.

(1-4)

सो०—बंदउँ अवध भुआल सत्य प्रेम जेहि राम पद ।
बिछुरत दीनदयाल प्रिय तनु तृन इव परिहरेउ ॥ १६ ॥

I adore the King of Ayodhyā, who cherished such true love for the feet of Śrī Rāma that he gave up his dear life as a mere straw the moment the Lord, who is compassionate to the poor, parted from him. (16)

चौ०—प्रनवउँ परिजन सहित बिदेहू । जाहि राम पद गूढ़ सनेहू ॥
जोग भोग महँ राखेउ गोई । राम बिलोकत प्रगटेउ सोई ॥ १ ॥
प्रनवउँ प्रथम भरत के चरना । जासु नेम ब्रत जाइ न बरना ॥
राम चरन पंकज मन जासू । लुबुध मधुप इव तजइ न पासू ॥ २ ॥
बंदउँ लछिमन पद जलजाता । सीतल सुभग भगत सुख दाता ॥
रघुपति कीरति बिमल पताका । दंड समान भयउ जस जाका ॥ ३ ॥
सेष सहस्रसीस जग कारन । जो अवतरेउ भूमि भय टारन ॥
सदा सो सानुकूल रह मो पर । कृपासिंधु सौमित्रि गुनाकर ॥ ४ ॥
रिपुसूदन पद कमल नमामी । सूर सुसील भरत अनुगामी ॥
महाबीर बिनवउँ हनुमाना । राम जासु जस आप बखाना ॥ ५ ॥

I make obeisance to King Janaka, along with his family, who bore hidden affection for the feet of Śrī Rāma. Even though he had veiled it under the cloak of asceticism and luxury, it broke out the moment he saw Śrī Rāma. Of Śrī Rāma's brothers, I bow, first of all, to the feet of Bharata, whose self-discipline and religious austerity beggar description and whose mind thirsts for the lotus feet of Śrī Rāma like a bee and never leaves their side. I reverence the lotus feet of Lakṣmaṇa,—cool and charming and a source of delight to the devotee,—whose renown served as a staff for the spotless flag of Śrī Rāma's glory. He is no other than the thousand-headed serpent-god, Śeṣa, the cause (support) of the universe, who came down to dispel the fear of the earth. May that son of Sumitrā, an ocean of benevolence and a mine of virtues, be ever propitious to me. I adore the lotus feet of Śatrughna (*lit.*, the slayer of his foes), who is valiant yet amiable in disposition, and a constant companion of Bharata. I supplicate Hanumān, the great hero, whose glory has been extolled by Śrī Rāma Himself.

(1—5)

सो०—प्रनवउँ पवनकुमार खल बन पावक ग्यानघन ।
जासु हृदय आगार बसहिं राम सर चाप धर ॥ १७ ॥

I greet Hanumān, the son of the Wind-god, an embodiment of wisdom, who is fire as it were for the forest of the wicked, and in the abode of whose heart resides Śrī Rāma, equipped with a bow and arrows.

(17)

चौ०—कपिपति रीछ निसाचर राजा । अगदादि जे कीस समाजा ॥
बंदउँ सब के चरन सुहाए । अधम सरीर राम जिन्ह पाए ॥ १ ॥
रघुपति चरन उपासक जेते । खग मृग सुर नर असुर समेते ॥
बंदउँ पद सरोज सब केरे । जे बिनु काम राम के चेरे ॥ २ ॥
सुक सनकादि भगत मुनि नारद । जे मुनिबर बिग्यान बिसारद ॥
प्रनवउँ सबहि धरनि धरि सीसा । करहु कृपा जन जानि मुनीसा ॥ ३ ॥
जनकसुता जग जननि जानकी । अतिसय प्रिय करुनानिधान की ॥
ताके जुग पद कमल मनावउँ । जासु कृपाँ निरमल मति पावउँ ॥ ४ ॥
पुनि मन बचन कर्म रघुनायक । चरन कमल बंदउँ सब लायक ॥
राजिवनयन धरें धनु सायक । भगत बिपति भंजन सुख दायक ॥ ५ ॥

The lord of monkeys (Sugrīva), the chief of bears (Jāmbavān), the king of demons (Vibhīṣaṇa) and the host of monkeys beginning with Angada, I reverence the charming feet of all, who attained Śrī Rāma even though born in the lowest species. As many worshippers there are of the feet of Raghupati (the Lord of Raghus), including birds, beasts, gods, human beings and demons, I adore the lotus feet of them all, who are disinterested servants of Śrī Rāma. Śuka, Sanaka and others (viz., Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra), sage Nārada and all other eminent sages who are devotees of God and proficient in the spiritual lore, I make obeisance to all, placing my head on the ground; be gracious to me, O lords of ascetics, knowing me as your servant. Jānakī, daughter of Janaka and mother of the universe and the most beloved consort of Śrī Rāma, the Fountain of Mercy, I seek to propitiate the pair of Her lotus feet, so that by Her grace I may be blessed with a refined intellect. Again, I adore, in thought, word and deed, the lotus feet of the all-worthy Lord of Raghus, who has lotus-like eyes and wields a bow and arrows, and who relieves the distress of His devotees and affords delight to them. (1—5)

दो०—गिरा अरथ जल बीचि सम कहिअत भिन्न न भिन्न ।
बंदउँ सीता राम पद जिन्हहि परम प्रिय खिन्न ॥ १८ ॥

I reverence the feet of Sītā and Rāma, who though stated to be different are yet identical just like a word and its meaning or like water and the waves on its surface, and to whom the afflicted are most dear. (18)

चौ०—बंदउँ नाम राम रघुबर को । हेतु कृसानु भानु हिमकर को ॥
बिधि हरि हरमय बेद प्रान सो । अगुन अनूपम गुन निधान सो ॥ १ ॥
महामंत्र जोइ जपत महेसू । कासीं मुकुति हेतु उपदेसू ॥
महिमा जासु जान गनराऊ । प्रथम पूजिअत नाम प्रभाऊ ॥ २ ॥
जान आदिकबि नाम प्रतापू । भयउ सुद्ध करि उलटा जापू ॥
सहस नाम सम सुनि सिव बानी । जपि जेईं पिय संग भवानी ॥ ३ ॥
हरषे हेतु हेरि हर ही को । किय भूषन तिय भूषन ती को ॥
नाम प्रभाउ जान सिव नीको । कालकूट फलु दीन्ह अमी को ॥ ४ ॥

I greet the name 'Rāma' of the chief of Raghus[1], which is composed of seed-letters[2] representing the fire-god, the sun-god and the moon-god (viz., *Ra*, *Ā* and *Ma* respectively). It is the same as Brahmā (the creative aspect of God), Viṣṇu (His preservative aspect) and Śiva (His disintegrating aspect), and the vital breath of the Vedas; It is unqualified, peerless and a mine of virtues. It is the great spell which Lord Maheśwara mutters and which, when imparted by Him at Kāśī (the modern Banaras), leads to emancipation[3]. Its glory is known to Lord Gaṇeśa, who is worshipped before all others as a concession to the Name 4. The oldest poet (Vālmīki) is acquainted with the glory of the Name, inasmuch as he attained to purity by repeating It in the reverse order[5]. Hearing the verdict of Lord Śiva that the name is as good as a thousand other names of God, Goddess Bhavānī (Pārvatī) dined with Her consort after uttering It only once[6] Noticing such partiality of Her heart for the Name, Hara (Lord Śiva) made that lady, who was the ornament of Her sex, the ornament of His own person (*i. e.*, made Her a part of His own being by assigning to Her the left half of His body). Śiva knows full well the power of the Name, due to which deadly poison served the purpose of nectar to Him. (1—4)

---

1. This distinguishes the Name from the two other names bearing the same sound but denoting two other personalities, viz., Paraśurāma and Balarāma (the elder brother of Śrī Kṛṣṇa).

2. Each letter-sound of the Sanskrit Alphabet represents one or more gods of the Hindu pantheon and the Tantras claim that these letters (which are technically known by the name of Bija-Mantras or seed-letters), if joined with other spells sacred to that particular deity and repeated with due ceremony a fixed number of times possess the efficacy of revealing the deity in person before the worshipper and propitiating him or her.

3. The scriptures maintain that Lord Śiva, the deity presiding over the holy city of Kāśī, whispers into the right ear of every creature, dying within its boundaries, the name 'Rāma' and thereby brings emancipation to the dying soul.

4. We read in the Purāṇas how there was a scramble for precedence among the gods, each of whom claimed the first position for himself. They approached Brahmā for a ruling. He told them that they should race round the world and that whoever finished the round quickest of all would be accounted the highest. Gaṇeśa, who rode on no better animal than a rat, naturally lagged behind. He met on the way the celestial sage Nārada, who advised him to scratch the word 'Rāma' on the ground and pace round It, as the word comprised in Itself the entire creation. Gaṇeśa did accordingly and was naturally the first to finish the round of the universe. Brahmā appreciated this act of Gaṇeśa and conceded his title to precedence over all the other gods. Since then Gaṇeśa has uninterruptedly enjoyed the right of being worshipped first of all.

5. Vālmiki was a highway robber in his earlier life and was known by the name of Ratnākara. Seven seers, who once fell a victim to his depredation, awakened him to the reprehensible nature of his conduct and instructed him in the holy name of Rāma. Completely immersed in sin he was, however, unable to utter the word. The seers, therefore, asked him to repeat the name in the reverse order. In this way he was eventually able to utter the name correctly and in course of time became so fond of repeating It that he ultimately turned out to be a pious sage and seer and related the story of Śrī Rāma in fine verse even before His advent.

6. We are told in the *Padmapurāṇa* how Bhagavān Śankara once invited His consort to join Him in His dinner. Goddess Pārvatī, however, declined on the ground that She had not yet recited the *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma*, which She must before Her breakfast. Bhagavān Śankara asked Her to repeat the name of Rāma instead, as a single utterance of the Name was as good as reciting a thousand other names of the Lord. Pārvatī did accordingly and forthwith joined Her lord in dinner.

दो०—बरषा रितु रघुपति भगति तुलसी सालि सुदास ।
राम नाम बर बरन जुग सावन भादव मास ॥ १९ ॥

Devotion to the Lord of Raghus is, as it were, the rainy season and the noble devotees, says Tulasīdāsa, represent the paddy crop; while the two charming syllables of the name 'Rāma' stand for the two months of Śrāvaṇa and Bhādrapada (corresponding roughly to July and August). (19)

चौ०—आखर मधुर मनोहर दोऊ । बरन बिलोचन जन जिय जोऊ ॥
सुमिरत सुलभ सुखद सब काहू । लोक लाहु परलोक निबाहू ॥ १ ॥
कहत सुनत सुमिरत सुठि नीके । राम लखन सम प्रिय तुलसी के ॥
बरनत बरन प्रीति बिलगाती । ब्रह्म जीव सम सहज सँघाती ॥ २ ॥
नर नारायन सरिस सुभ्राता । जग पालक बिसेषि जन त्राता ॥
भगति सुतिय कल करन बिभूषन । जग हित हेतु बिमल बिधु पूषन ॥ ३ ॥
स्वाद तोष सम सुगति सुधा के । कमठ सेष सम धर बसुधा के ॥
जन मन मंजु कंज मधुकर से । जीह जसोमति हरि हलधर से ॥ ४ ॥

Both the letter-sounds are sweet and attractive; they are the two eyes, as it were, of the Alphabet and the very life of the devotee. Easy to remember and delightful to one and all, they bring gain here and provide sustenance hereafter. They are most delightful to utter, hear and remember and are dear as Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to Tulasīdāsa. When treated separately, the two letters lose their harmony (*i. e.*, are differently pronounced, bear diverse meanings in the form of seed-letters and as such yield different results); whereas they are naturally allied even as Brahma (the Cosmic Spirit) and Jīva (the individual soul). Good brothers like the divine sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa, they are sustainers of the universe and redeemers of the devotee in particular. They are beautiful ornaments for the ears of the fair damsel in the form of Bhakti (Devotion) and stand as the spotless sun and moon for the good of the world. They are like the taste and the gratifying quality of nectar in the form emancipation, and are supporters of the globe like the divine Tortoise* and the serpent-god Śeṣa. Again, they are like bees for the beautiful lotus in the shape of the devotee's mind and are the very like of Hari (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) and Haladhara (Balarāma, who wielded a plough as a weapon) for Yaśodā (Their foster-mother, the wife of Nanda) in the shape of the tongue. (1–4)

दो०—एकु छत्रु एकु मुकुटमनि सब बरननि पर जोउ ।
तुलसी रघुबर नाम के बरन बिराजत दोउ ॥ २० ॥

Lo! the two letters (र and म) forming part of the name of Raghuvara (the Chief of the Raghus) crown all the letters of the Alphabet, the one spread-

* We are told in the *Bhāgavata* and other Purāṇas how God Viṣṇu assumed the form of a gigantic tortoise in order to support Mount Mandara and prevent it from sinking while it was being rotated by gods and demons in their attempt to churn the ocean of milk and obtain nectar out of it.

ing like an umbrella and the other resting as a crest-jewel, O Tulasidāsa. * (20)

चौ०—समुझत सरिस नाम अरु नामी । प्रीति परसपर प्रभु अनुगामी ॥
नाम रूप दुइ ईस उपाधी । अकथ अनादि सुसामुझि साधी ॥ १ ॥
को बड़ छोट कहत अपराधू । सुनि गुन भेदु समुझिहहिं साधू ॥
देखिअहिं रूप नाम आधीना । रूप ग्यान नहिं नाम बिहीना ॥ २ ॥
रूप बिसेष नाम बिनु जानें । करतल गत न परहिं पहिचानें ॥
सुमिरिअ नाम रूप बिनु देखें । आवत हृदयँ सनेह बिसेषें ॥ ३ ॥
नाम रूप गति अकथ कहानी । समुझत सुखद न परति बखानी ॥
अगुन सगुन बिच नाम सुसाखी । उभय प्रबोधक चतुर दुभाषी ॥ ४ ॥

The name and the object named, though similar in significance, are allied as master and servant one to the other. (That is to say, even though there is complete identity between God and His name, the former closely follows the latter even as a servant follows his master. The Lord appears in person at the very mention of His Name). Name and form are the two attributes of God; both of them are ineffable and beginningless and can be rightly understood only by means of good intelligence. It is presumptuous on one's part to declare as to which is superior or inferior. Hearing the distinctive merits of both, pious souls will judge for themselves. Forms are found to be subordinate to the name; without the name you cannot come to the knowledge of a form. Typical forms cannot be identified, even if they be in your hand, without knowing their name. And if the name is remembered even without seeing the form, the latter flashes on the mind with a special liking for it. The mystery of name and form is a tale which cannot be told; though delightful to comprehend, it cannot be described in words. Between the unqualified Absolute and qualified Divinity, the Name is a good intermediary; it is a clever interpreter revealing the truth of both. (1—4)

दो०—राम नाम मनिदीप धरु जीह देहरीं द्वार ।
तुलसी भीतर बाहेरहुँ जौं चाहसि उजिआर ॥ २१ ॥

Instal the luminous gem in the shape of the divine name 'Rāma' on the threshold of the tongue at the doorway of your mouth, if you will have light both inside and outside, O Tulasidāsa. (21)

चौ०—नाम जीहँ जपि जागहिं जोगी । बिरति बिरंचि प्रपंच बियोगी ॥
ब्रह्मसुखहि अनुभवहिं अनूपा । अकथ अनामय नाम न रूपा ॥ १ ॥

* The letter 'र्' of the Sanskrit alphabet, when immediately preceding another consonant or the vowel 'ऋ', is placed above that letter in the shape of a curved line (e. g., in र्क and र्ऋ); while the nasal consonant 'म्' when preceded by any other letter, is changed into a dot (technically known by the name of 'Anuswāra) when placed on the top of that letter (e. g., in हं). The curved line standing for the letter 'र्' has been poetically compared in the above Dohā to an umbrella and the dot substituted for 'म्' likened to a crest-jewel, both of which enjoy an exalted position and are emblems of the royal state. In this way they are recognized as superior to all other letters of the Alphabet.

जाना चहहिं गूढ़ गति जेऊ । नाम जीहँ जपि जानहिं तेऊ ॥
साधक नाम जपहिं लय लाएँ । होहिं सिद्ध अनिमादिक पाएँ ॥ २ ॥
जपहिं नामु जन आरत भारी । मिटहिं कुसंकट होहिं सुखारी ॥
राम भगत जग चारि प्रकारा । सुकृती चारिउ अनघ उदारा ॥ ३ ॥
चहू चतुर कहुँ नाम अधारा । ग्यानी प्रभुहि बिसेषि पिआरा ॥
चहुँ जुग चहुँ श्रुति नाम प्रभाऊ । कलि बिसेषि नहिं आन उपाऊ ॥ ४ ॥

Yogīs (mystics) who are full of dispassion and are wholly detached from God's creation keep awake (in the daylight of wisdom) muttering the Name with their tongue, and enjoy the felicity of Brahma (the Absolute), which is incomparable, unspeakable, unmixed with sorrow and devoid of name and form. Even those (seekers of Truth) who aspire to know the mysterious ways of Providence are able to comprehend them by muttering the Name. Strivers (hankering after worldly achievements) repeat the Name, absorbed in contemplation, and become accomplished, acquiring superhuman powers such as that of becoming infinitely small in size.* If devotees in distress mutter the Name, their worst calamities of the gravest type disappear and they become happy. In this world there are four kinds of devotees† of Śrī Rāma; all the four of them are virtuous, sinless and noble. All the four, clever as they are, rely upon the Name. Of these the enlightened devotee is specially dear to the Lord. The glory of the Name is supreme in all the four Yugas and all the four Vedas, particularly in the Kali age, in which there is no other means of salvation.
(1–4)

दो०—सकल कामना हीन जे राम भगति रस लीन ।
नाम सुप्रेम पियूष ह्रद तिन्हहुँ किए मन मीन ॥ २२ ॥

Even those who are free from all desires and absorbed in the joy of devotion to Śrī Rāma have thrown their heart as fish into the nectarine lake of supreme affection for the Name.
(22)

चौ०—अगुन सगुन दुइ ब्रह्म सरूपा । अकथ अगाध अनादि अनूपा ॥
मोरें मत बड़ नामु दुहू तें । किए जेहिं जुग निज बस निज बूतें ॥ १ ॥

---

* Works on Yoga enumerate the following eight kinds of miraculous powers acquired by Yogīs:—

(i) *Aṇimā* (the faculty of reducing one's body to the size of an atom), (ii) *Mahimā* (the power of expanding one's body to an infinitely large size), (iii) *Garimā* (the power of becoming infinitely heavy), (iv) *Laghimā* (the power of becoming infinitely light in body), (v) *Prāpti* (unrestricted access to all places), (vi) *Prākāmya* (realizing whatever one desires), (vii) *Īśitva* (absolute lordship) and (viii) *Vaśitva* (subjugating all).

† Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā mentions four kinds of devotees, viz., (i) Ārta (the afflicted), (ii) Jijñāsu (the seeker of Truth), (iii) Arthārthī (the seeker of worldly riches) and (iv) Jñānī (the enlightened), and speaks of them all as virtuous and benevolent. Of course, the enlightened devotee, it is pointed out, is the most beloved of the Lord and constitutes His very self (*vide* VII. 16—18).

प्रौढ़ि सुजन जनि जानहिं जन की । कहउँ प्रतीति प्रीति रुचि मन की ॥
एकु दारुगत देखिअ एकू । पावक सम जुग ब्रह्म बिबेकू ॥ २ ॥
उभय अगम जुग सुगम नाम तें । कहेउँ नामु बड़ ब्रह्म राम तें ॥
ब्यापकु एकु ब्रह्म अबिनासी । सत चेतन घन आनँद रासी ॥ ३ ॥
अस प्रभु हृदयँ अछत अबिकारी । सकल जीव जग दीन दुखारी ॥
नाम निरूपन नाम जतन तें । सोउ प्रगटत जिमि मोल रतन तें ॥ ४ ॥

There are two aspects of God—the one unqualified and the other qualified. Both these aspects are unspeakable, unfathomable, without beginning and without parallel. To my mind, greater than both is the Name, that has established Its rule over both by Its might. Friends should not take this as a bold assertion on the part of this servant; I record my mind's own conviction, partiality and liking. The two aspects of Brahma (God) should be recognized as akin to fire: the one (viz., the Absolute) represents fire which is latent in wood; while the other (qualified Divinity) corresponds to that which is externally visible. Though both are inaccessible by themselves, they are easily attainable through the Name; therefore I have called the Name greater than Brahma and Śrī Rāma both. Brahma (God) is one, all-pervading and imperishable; He is all truth, consciousness and a compact mass of joy. Even though such immutable Lord is present in every heart, all beings in this world are nonetheless miserable and unhappy. Through the practice of the Name preceded by Its true appraisement, however, the same Brahma reveals Itself even as the value of a jewel is revealed by its correct knowledge. (1—4)

दो०—निरगुन तें एहि भाँति बड़ नाम प्रभाउ अपार ।
कहउँ नामु बड़ राम तें निज बिचार अनुसार ॥ २३ ॥

The glory of the Name is thus infinitely greater than that of the Absolute; I shall show below how in my judgment the Name is superior even to Śrī Rāma. (23)

चौ०—राम भगत हित नर तनु धारी । सहि संकट किए साधु सुखारी ॥
नामु सप्रेम जपत अनयासा । भगत होहिं मुद मंगल बासा ॥ १ ॥
राम एक तापस तिय तारी । नाम कोटि खल कुमति सुधारी ॥
रिषि हित राम सुकेतुसुता की । सहित सेन सुत कीन्हि बिबाकी ॥ २ ॥
सहित दोष दुख दास दुरासा । दलइ नामु जिमि रबि निसि नासा ॥
भंजेउ राम आपु भव चापू । भव भय भंजन नाम प्रतापू ॥ ३ ॥
दंडक बनु प्रभु कीन्ह सुहावन । जन मन अमित नाम किए पावन ॥
निसिचर निकर दले रघुनंदन । नामु सकल कलि कलुष निकंदन ॥ ४ ॥

For the sake of His devotees Śrī Rāma assumed the form of a human being and, suffering calamities Himself, brought relief to the pious. By fondly repeating His Name, on the other hand, devotees easily become abodes of joy and blessings. Śrī Rāma Himself redeemed a single woman (Ahalyā),* the wife of an ascetic; while His Name corrected the error of crores of wicked souls. For the sake of the sage (Viśwāmitra) Śrī Rāma wrought the destruction of

* See Bālakāṇḍa (209. 6 to 211).

Suketu's daughter* (Tāḍakā) with her army and son (Subāhu); while His Name puts an end to the devotee's vain hopes along with his errors and sorrows even as the sun terminates night. In His own person Śrī Rāma broke the bow of Śiva†, while the very glory of His Name dispels the fear of rebirth.‡ The Lord restored the charm of the Dandaka forest§ alone, while His Name purified the mind of countless devotees. The Delighter of Raghus (Śrī Rāma) crushed only a host of demons, while His Name uproots all the impurities of the Kali age.

(1–4)

दो०—सबरी गीध सुसेवकनि सुगति दीन्हि रघुनाथ ।
नाम उधारे अमित खल बेद बिदित गुन गाथ ॥ २४ ॥

The Lord of Raghus conferred immortality only on faithful servants like Śabarī (the celebrated Bhil woman) and the vulture (Jaṭāyu)×, while His Name has delivered innumerable wretches; the tale of Its virtues is well-known in the Vedas.

(24)

चौ०—राम सुकंठ बिभीषन दोऊ । राखे सरन जान सबु कोऊ ॥
नाम गरीब अनेक नेवाजे । लोक बेद बर बिरिद बिराजे ॥ १ ॥
राम भालु कपि कटकु बटोरा । सेतु हेतु श्रमु कीन्ह न थोरा ॥
नामु लेत भवसिंधु सुखाहीं । करहु बिचारु सुजन मन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
राम सकुल रन रावनु मारा । सीय सहित निज पुर पगु धारा ॥
राजा रामु अवध रजधानी । गावत गुन सुर मुनि बर बानी ॥ ३ ॥
सेवक सुमिरत नामु सप्रीती । बिनु श्रम प्रबल मोह दलु जीती ॥
फिरत सनेहँ मगन सुख अपनें । नाम प्रसाद सोच नहिं सपनें ॥ ४ ॥

As is well-known to all, Śrī Rāma extended His protection to two devotees only, viz., Sugrīva and Vibhīṣaṇa; His Name, on the other hand, has showered Its grace on numerous humble souls. This superb glory of the Name shines forth in the world as well as in the Vedas. Śrī Rāma collected an army of bears and monkeys and took no little pains over the construction of a bridge (to connect the mainland with the island of Lankā) Through the repetition of His Name, however, the ocean of mundane existence itself gets dried up: let the wise bear this in mind. Śrī Rāma killed in battle Rāvaṇa with all his family and returned to His own city with Sītā. He was then crowned king in the capital of Ayodhyā,

* Ibid., 208. 3 and 209. 3.

† Ibid., 260. 4

‡ Here there is a pun on the word 'Bhava', which has been used as a synonym of Lord Śiva in the first instance and again in the sense of rebirth. The comparison has been drawn between Śrī Rāma Himself, on the one hand, and the glory of His Name (not the Name Itself), on the other. The latter, it is pointed out, excels the former in that while Śrī Rāma broke a concrete object like the bow, the glory of His Name dispels an abstract thing like the fear of rebirth.

§ The forest of Daṇḍaka had been rendered unfit for life in any form whatsoever under a curse from the sage Śukrāchārya. The divine presence of Śrī Rāma, however, removed the curse and restored the forest to its original charm.

× For the accounts of Śabarī and Jaṭāyu see *Araṇyakaṇḍa* 33. 3 to 36 and 28. 4 to 32 respectively.

while gods and sages sung His glories in choicest phrases. His servants are, however, able to conquer the formidable army of error by fondly remembering His Name and, absorbed in devotion, move about in joy which is peculiarly their own; by the grace of the Name they know not sorrow even in dream.' (1—4)

दो०—ब्रह्म राम तें नामु बड़ बर दायक बर दानि ।
रामचरित सत कोटि महँ लिय महेस जियँ जानि ॥ २५ ॥

The Name is thus greater than Brahma and Śrī Rāma both, and confers blessings even on the bestowers of boons. Knowing this in His heart, the great Lord Śiva chose this word (Rāma) for Himself out of Śrī Rāma's story comprising 100 crore verses.* (25)

[PAUSE 1 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—नाम प्रसाद संभु अबिनासी । साजु अमंगल मंगल रासी ॥
सुक सनकादि सिद्ध मुनि जोगी । नाम प्रसाद ब्रह्मसुख भोगी ॥ १ ॥
नारद जानेउ नाम प्रतापू । जग प्रिय हरि हरि हर प्रिय आपू ॥
नामु जपत प्रभु कीन्ह प्रसादू । भगत सिरोमनि भे प्रहलादू ॥ २ ॥
ध्रुवँ सगलानि जपेउ हरि नाऊँ । पायउ अचल अनूपम ठाऊँ ॥
सुमिरि पवनसुत पावन नामू । अपने बस करि राखे रामू ॥ ३ ॥
अपतु अजामिलु गजु गनिकाऊ । भए मुकुत हरि नाम प्रभाऊ ॥
कहौं कहाँ लगि नाम बड़ाई । रामु न सकहिं नाम गुन गाई ॥ ४ ॥

By the grace of the Name alone Lord Śambhu (Śiva) is immortal and, though endowed with inauspicious paraphernalia (such as a wreath of skulls), is yet a storehouse of blessings. Again, it is by the grace of the Name alone that Siddhas (adepts), sages and Yogīs like Śuka, Sanaka and others enjoy divine raptures. Nārada realized the glory of the Name; that is why, while Śrī Hari is beloved of the world (and Hara is dear to Śrī Hari), he (Nārada) is dear to Hari and Hara (Viṣṇu and Śiva) both. It was because of his repeating the Name that the Lord showered His grace on Prahlāda, who thereby became the crest-jewel of devotees. Dhruva repeated the name of Śrī Hari with a feeling of indignation (at the harsh treatment received from his stepmother) and thereby attained a fixed and incomparable station in the heavens. It is by remembering the holy Name that Hanumān (son of the Wind-god) holds Śrī Rāma under His thumb. The vile Ajāmila and even the celebrated elephant and the harlot of the legend were liberated by the power of Śrī Hari's name. I have no words to depict the glory of the Name: not even Rāma can adequately glorify It. (1—4)

दो०—नामु राम को कलपतरु कलि कल्यान निवासु ।
जो सुमिरत भयो भाँग तें तुलसी तुलसीदासु ॥ २६ ॥

The name of Rāma is a wish-yielding tree, the very home of beatitude in this age of Kali, by remembering which Tulasīdāsa (the poet himself) was transformed from an intoxicating drug like the hemp-plant into the holy basil. (26)

---

* The *Rāmāyaṇa* as originally composed by Brahmā himself and delivered to Lord Śiva through Nārada is believed to have contained as many as a 100 crore verses.

चौ०—चहुँ जुग तीनि काल तिहुँ लोका । भए नाम जपि जीव बिसोका ॥
बेद पुरान संत मत एहू । सकल सुकृत फल राम सनेहू ॥ १ ॥
ध्यानु प्रथम जुग मखबिधि दूजें । द्वापर परितोषत प्रभु पूजें ॥
कलि केवल मल मूल मलीना । पाप पयोनिधि जन मन मीना ॥ २ ॥
नाम कामतरु काल कराला । सुमिरत समन सकल जग जाला ॥
राम नाम कलि अभिमत दाता । हित परलोक लोक पितु माता ॥ ३ ॥
नहिं कलि करम न भगति बिबेकू । राम नाम अवलंबन एकू ॥
कालनेमि कलि कपट निधानू । नाम सुमति समरथ हनुमानू ॥ ४ ॥

(Not only in this Kali age, but) in all the four ages*, at all times (past, present and future) and in all the three spheres (viz., heaven, earth and the subterranean region) creatures have been rid of grief by repeating the Name. The verdict of the Vedas and the Purāṇas as well as of saints is just this: that love of Rāma (or the name 'Rāma') is the reward of all virtuous acts. In the first age, contemplation; in the second age, sacrifice; in the Dwāpara age the Lord is propitiated through worship. This age of Kali, however, is simply corrupt and the root of all impurities, where the mind of man wallows like a fish in the ocean of sin. In this terrible age the Name alone is the wish-yielding tree, the very thought of which puts an end to all the illusions of the world. The Name of Rāma is the bestower of one's desired object in this age of Kali It is beneficent in the other world and one's father and mother in this world In Kaliyuga neither Karma (action) nor Bhakti (devotion) nor again Jñāna (knowledge) avails; the Name of Rāma is the only resort. The age of Kali is as it were the demon Kālanemi, the repository of all wiles; whereas the Name is the wise and mighty Hanumān †
(1—4)

दो०—राम नाम नरकेसरी कनककसिपु कलिकाल ।
जापक जन प्रहलाद जिमि पालिहि दलि सुरसाल ॥ २७ ॥

(To use another metaphor) the Name of Rāma is, as it were, the Lord manifested as a man-lion and the age of Kali, the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu. Crushing this enemy of gods, the Name will protect the devotees repeating It, even as the Man-lion protected Prahlāda. (27)

---

* The span of life of the universe, which is known by the name of Kalpa and consists of 4,32,00,00,000 human years, has been divided into 1,000 epochs or Chaturyugas. Each Chaturyuga is made up of four Yugas or ages, viz., Satyayuga, Tretā, Dwāpara and Kaliyuga. Their duration is given below:

Satyayuga······17,28,000 years
Tretā······12,96,000 „
Dwāpara······ 8,64,000 „
Kaliyuga······ 4,32,000 „

Thus it will be seen that the duration of Dwāpara is twice that of Kaliyuga, that of Tretā thrice that of Kaliyuga and that of Satyayuga four times that of Kaliyuga. In this way the duration of a Chaturyuga is ten times that of Kaliyuga.

† The story of Kālanemi and his death at the hands of Hanumān has been briefly told in the foot-note under 6.3 in this very Kāṇḍa.

चौ०—भाय कुभाय अनख आलसहूँ । नाम जपत मंगल दिसि दसहूँ ॥
सुमिरि सो नाम राम गुन गाथा । करउँ नाइ रघुनाथहि माथा ॥ १ ॥
मोरि सुधारिहि सो सब भाँती । जासु कृपा नहिं कृपाँ अघाती ॥
राम सुस्वामि कुसेवकु मोसो । निज दिसि देखि दयानिधि पोसो ॥ २ ॥
लोकहुँ बेद सुसाहिब रीती । बिनय सुनत पहिचानत प्रीती ॥
गनी गरीब ग्रामनर नागर । पंडित मूढ मलीन उजागर ॥ ३ ॥
सुकबि कुकबि निज मति अनुहारी । नृपहि सराहत सब नर नारी ॥
साधु सुजान सुसील नृपाला । ईस अंस भव परम कृपाला ॥ ४ ॥
सुनि सनमानहिं सबहि सुबानी । भनिति भगति नति गति पहिचानी ॥
यह प्राकृत महिपाल सुभाऊ । जान सिरोमनि कोसलराऊ ॥ ५ ॥
रीझत राम सनेह निसोतें । को जग मंद मलिनमति मोतें ॥ ६ ॥

The Name repeated either with good or evil intentions, in an angry mood or even while yawning, diffuses joy in all the ten directions. Remembering that Name and bowing my head to the Lord of Raghus, I proceed to recount the virtues of Śrī Rāma. He whose grace is never tired of showing its goodwill to others will mend my errors in every way. Rāma a noble lord, and a poor servant like myself ! Yet, true to His own disposition, that storehouse of compassion has fostered me. In the world as well as in the Vedas we observe the following characteristic in a good master, viz., that he comes to recognize one's devotion to him as soon as he hears one's prayer. Rich or poor, rustic or urban, learned or unlettered, of good repute or bad, a good poet or a bad one, all men and women extol the king according to his or her light. And the pious, sensible, amiable and supremely compassionate ruler, who takes his descent from a ray of God, greets all with sweet words, hearing their compliments and appraising their composition, devotion, supplication and conduct. Such is the way of earthly monarchs, to say nothing of the Lord of Kosala (Śrī Rāma), who is the crest-jewel of wise men. Śrī Rāma gets pleased with unalloyed love; but who is duller and more impure of mind in this world than I ? (1—6)

दो०—सठ सेवक की प्रीति रुचि रखिहहिं राम कृपालु ।
उपल किए जलजान जेहिं सचिव सुमति कपि भालु ॥ २८ (क) ॥
हौंहु कहावत सबु कहत राम सहत उपहास ।
साहिब सीतानाथ सो सेवक तुलसीदास ॥ २८ (ख) ॥

The benevolent Rāma will nonetheless respect the devotion and pleasure of this wicked servant,—Śrī Rāma, who made barks out of rocks and wise counsellors out of monkeys and bears. Everybody calls me a servant of the Lord and I myself claim to be one; and Śrī Rāma puts up with the scoffing remark that a master like Sītā's lord has a servant like Tulasīdāsa. (28 A—B)

चौ०—अति बड़ि मोरि ढिठाई खोरी । सुनि अघ नरकहुँ नाक सकोरी ॥
समुझि सहम मोहि अपडर अपनें । सो सुधि राम कीन्हि नहिं सपनें ॥ १ ॥
सुनि अवलोकि सुचित चख चाही । भगति मोरि मति स्वामि सराही ॥
कहत नसाइ होइ हियँ नीकी । रीझत राम जानि जन जी की ॥ २ ॥

रहति न प्रभु चित चूक किए की । करत सुरति सय बार हिए की ॥
जेहिं अघ बधेउ ब्याध जिमि बाली । फिरि सुकंठ सोइ कीन्हि कुचाली ॥ ३ ॥
सोइ करतूति बिभीषन केरी । सपनेहुँ सो न राम हियँ हेरी ॥
ते भरतहि भेंटत सनमाने । राजसभाँ रघुबीर बखाने ॥ ४ ॥

My presumption and error are indeed very great and, hearing the tale of my sins, even hell has turned up its nose at them. I shudder to think of it due to my assumed fears; while Śrī Rāma took no notice of them even in a dream. The Lord, on the other hand, applauded my devotion and spirit on hearing of, perceiving and scanning them with the mind's eye. If there is anything good in one's heart, it is marred by the telling; for Śrī Rāma is pleased to note what is there in the devotee's mind. The Lord never cherishes in His mind the lapse, if any, on the part of a devotee; while He remembers the latter's spirit a hundred times. For instance, the very crime for which He had killed Vāli (the monkey-king of Kiṣkindhā) even as a huntsman was repeated in the misdemeanour perpetrated by Sugrīva.* Vibhīṣaṇa too was guilty of the same offence; but Śrī Rāma took no cognizance of it even in a dream. The Hero of Raghu's clan, on the other hand, honoured them both at His meeting with Bharata (on His return from Lankā) and commended them in open court. (1—4)

दो०—प्रभु तरु तर कपि डार पर ते किए आपु समान ।
तुलसी कहूँ न राम से साहिब सीलनिधान ॥ २९ (क) ॥
राम निकाईं रावरी है सबही को नीक ।
जौं यह साँची है सदा तौ नीको तुलसीक ॥ २९ (ख) ॥
एहि बिधि निज गुन दोष कहि सबहि बहुरि सिरु नाइ ।
बरनउँ रघुबर बिसद जसु सुनि कलि कलुष नसाइ ॥ २९ (ग) ॥

While the Lord sat at the foot of trees, the monkeys perched themselves high on the boughs: such insolent creatures He exalted to His own position ! There is no lord so generous as Śrī Rāma, O Tulasīdāsa ! Your goodness, O Rāma, is beneficent to all; if this is a fact, Tulasīdāsa too will be blessed by the same. Thus revealing my merits and demerits and bowing my head once more to all, I proceed to sing the immaculate glory of the Chief of Raghus, by hearing which the impurities of the Kali age are wiped away. (29 A—C)

---

* Vāli was killed by Śrī Rāma on the plea that the former had usurped his younger brother's wife. Sugrīva and Vibhīṣaṇa too are stated to have taken Tārā (Vāli's wife) and Mandodarī (Rāvaṇa's wife) respectively as their consort after the death of their husbands. In this way even though Sugrīva and Vibhīṣaṇa too were practically guilty of the same offence which brought the Lord's wrath on Vāli, their guilt was extenuated by the fact that they took those ladies as wife after their brother's death and with the consent of the other party, and by the further fact that their conduct was in keeping with the practice in vogue among the monkey and demon chiefs. That is why, while the poet characterizes Vāli's conduct as a crime (Agha), he dismisses Sugrīva's act as a mere misdemeanour (कुचाली).

चौ०—जागबलिक जो कथा सुहाई । भरद्वाज मुनिबरहि सुनाई ॥
कहिहउँ सोइ संबाद बखानी । सुनहुँ सकल सज्जन सुखु मानी ॥ १ ॥
संभु कीन्ह यह चरित सुहावा । बहुरि कृपा करि उमहि सुनावा ॥
सोइ सिव कागभुसुंडिहि दीन्हा । राम भगत अधिकारी चीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
तेहि सन जागबलिक पुनि पावा । तिन्ह पुनि भरद्वाज प्रति गावा ॥
ते श्रोता बकता समसीला । सवँदरसी जानहिं हरिलीला ॥ ३ ॥
जानहिं तीनि काल निज ग्याना । करतल गत आमलक समाना ॥
औरउ जे हरिभगत सुजाना । कहहिं सुनहिं समुझहिं बिधि नाना ॥ ४ ॥

The charming story which Yājñavalkya related to the good sage Bharadwāja, I shall repeat the same dialogue at length; let all good souls hear it with a feeling of delight. This ravishing tale was conceived by Śambhu (Lord Śiva), who graciously communicated it to His Consort Umā (Pārvatī). Śiva imparted it once more to Kākabhuśuṇḍi (a sage in the form of a crow), knowing him to be a devotee of Śrī Rāma and one qualified to hear it. And it was Yājñavalkya who received it from the latter (Kākabhuśuṇḍi) and narrated it to Bharadwāja. Both these, the listener (Bharadwāja) and the reciter (Yājñavalkya), are equally virtuous; they view all alike and are acquainted with the pastimes of Śrī Hari. Like a myrobalan fruit placed on one's palm, they hold the past, present and future within their knowledge. Besides these, other enlightened devotees of Śrī Hari too recite, hear and understand this story in diverse ways. (1—4)

दो०—मैं पुनि निज गुर सन सुनी कथा सो सूकरखेत ।
समुझी नहिं तसि बालपन तब अति रहेउँ अचेत ॥ ३० (क) ॥
श्रोता बकता ग्याननिधि कथा राम कै गूढ़ ।
किमि समुझौं मैं जीव जड़ कलि मल ग्रसित बिमूढ़ ॥ ३० (ख) ॥

Then I heard the same story in the holy Śūkarakṣetra* (the modern Soron in the western United Provinces) from my preceptor; but as I had no sense in those days of my childhood; I could not follow it full well. Both the listener and the reciter of the mysterious story of Śrī Rāma must be repositories of wisdom. How, then, could I, a dull and stupid creature steeped in the impurities of the Kali age, expect to follow it? (30 A—B)

चौ०—तदपि कही गुर बारहिं बारा । समुझि परी कछु मति अनुसारा ॥
भाषाबद्ध करबि मैं सोई । मोरें मन प्रबोध जेहिं होई ॥ १ ॥
जस कछु बुधि बिबेक बल मेरें । तस कहिहउँ हियँ हरि के प्रेरें ॥
निज संदेह मोह भ्रम हरनी । करउँ कथा भव सरिता तरनी ॥ २ ॥
बुध बिश्राम सकल जन रंजनि । रामकथा कलि कलुष बिभंजनि ॥
रामकथा कलि पंनग भरनी । पुनि बिबेक पावक कहुँ अरनी ॥ ३ ॥

* The name is associated with the descent of Śrī Hari as a Boar (Śūkara) who killed Hiraṇyākṣa, the elder brother of Hiraṇyakaśipu, and lifted up the earth from the depths of the ocean, to which it had been consigned by the said demon.

राम कथा कलि कामद गाई । सुजन सजीवनि मूरि सुहाई ॥
सोइ बसुधातल सुधा तरंगिनि । भय भंजनि भ्रम भेक भुअंगिनि ॥ ४ ॥
असुर सेन सम नरक निकंदिनि । साधु बिबुध कुल हित गिरिनंदिनि ॥
संत समाज पयोधि रमा सी । बिस्व भार भर अचल छमा सी ॥ ५ ॥
जम गन मुहँ मसि जग जमुना सी । जीवन मुकुति हेतु जनु कासी ॥
रामहि प्रिय पावनि तुलसी सी । तुलसिदास हित हियँ हुलसी सी ॥ ६ ॥
सिव प्रिय मेकल सैल सुता सी । सकल सिद्धि सुख संपति रासी ॥
सदगुन सुर गन अंब अदिति सी । रघुबर भगति प्रेम परमिति सी ॥ ७ ॥

Nevertheless, when the preceptor repeated the story time after time, I followed it to a certain extent according to my poor lights. I shall versify the same in the popular tongue, so that my mind may derive satisfaction from it. Equipped with what little intellectual and critical power I possess I shall write with a heart inspired by Śrī Hari. The story I am going to tell is such as will dispel my own doubts, errors and delusion and will serve as a boat for crossing the stream of mundane existence. The story of Rāma is a solace to the learned and a source of delight to all men and wipes out the impurities of the Kali age. Śrī Rāma's story is a pea-hen for the serpent in the form of the Kali age; again, it is a wooden stick * for kindling the sacred fire of wisdom. The tale of Rāma is the cow of plenty in this age of Kali; it is a beautiful life-giving herb for the virtuous. It is a veritable river of nectar on the surface of this globe; it shatters the fear of birth and death and is a virtual snake for the frog of delusion. It is beneficent to pious souls even as Goddess Pārvatī (the daughter of Himavān) is friendly to gods; again, it puts an end to hell even as Pārvatī exterminated the army of demons. It flows from the assemblage of saints, even as Lakṣmī (the goddess of wealth) sprang from the ocean; and like the immovable earth it bears the burden of the entire creation. Like the sacred river Yamunā in this world it scares away the messengers of Yama (the god of death). It is holy Kāśī as it were for the liberation of souls. It is dear to Rāma as the sacred basil plant and is truly beneficent to Tulasīdāsa as his own mother, Hulasī. It is beloved of Lord Śiva as the river Narmadā (which has its source in Mount Mekala, a peak of the Amarkantak hills); it is a mine of all attainments as well as of happiness and prosperity. It is to noble qualities what mother Aditi is to gods; it is the culmination as it were of devotion to and love for Śrī Rāma. (1—7)

दो०—राम कथा मंदाकिनी चित्रकूट चित चारु ।
तुलसी सुभग सनेह बन सिय रघुबीर बिहारु ॥ ३१ ॥

The story of Śrī Rāma is the river Mandākinī (which washes the foot of Chitrakūṭa); a guileless heart is Mount Chitrakūṭa (one of the happy resorts of Śrī Rāma during his wanderings in the forest); while pure love, says Tulasīdāsa, is the woodland in which Sītā and Rāma carry on Their divine pastimes. (31)

* The fire used in sacrifices in India is produced by revolving a wooden stick against a wooden block.

चौ०--राम चरित चिंतामनि चारू । संत सुमति तिय सुभग सिंगारू ॥
जग मंगल गुन ग्राम राम के । दानि मुकुति धन धरम धाम के ॥ १ ॥
सदगुर ग्यान बिराग जोग के । बिबुध बैद भव भीम रोग के ॥
जननि जनक सिय राम प्रेम के । बीज सकल ब्रत धरम नेम के ॥ २ ॥
समन पाप संताप सोक के । प्रिय पालक परलोक लोक के ॥
सचिव सुभट भूपति बिचार के । कुंभज लोभ उदधि अपार के ॥ ३ ॥
काम कोह कलि मल करि गन के । केहरि सावक जन मन बन के ॥
अतिथि पूज्य प्रियतम पुरारि के । कामद घन दारिद दवारि के ॥ ४ ॥
मंत्र महामनि बिषय ब्याल के । मेटत कठिन कुअंक भाल के ॥
हरन मोह तम दिनकर कर से । सेवक सालि पाल जलधर से ॥ ५ ॥
अभिमत दानि देवतरु बर से । सेवत सुलभ सुखद हरि हर से ॥
सुकबि सरद नभ मन उडगन से । राम भगत जन जीवन धन से ॥ ६ ॥
सकल सुकृत फल भूरि भोग से । जग हित निरुपधि साधु लोग से ॥
सेवक मन मानस मराल से । पावन गंग तरंग माल से ॥ ७ ॥

The narrative of Rāma is a lovely wish-yielding gem, and a graceful adornment for saintly wisdom. The hosts of virtues possessed by Śrī Rāma are a blessing to the world and the bestowers of liberation, riches, religious merit and the divine abode. They are true teachers of wisdom, dispassion and Yoga (contemplative union with God), and celestial physicians (Aswinīkumāras) for the fell disease of metempsychosis; parents of devotion to Sītā and Rāma and the seed of all holy vows, practices and observances; antidotes for sins, agonies and griefs and beloved guardians in this as well as in the next world; valiant ministers to King Reason, and a veritable Agastya* drinking up the illimitable ocean of greed; young lions residing in the forest of the devotee's mind to kill the herd of elephants in the shape of lust, anger and impurities of the Kali age; dear to Lord Śiva (the Slayer of the demon Tripura) as a highly respectable and most beloved guest, and wish-yielding clouds quenching the wild fire of indigence. They are spells and valuable gems as it were for counteracting the venom of serpents in the form of sensuous enjoyments, and efface the deep marks of evil destiny contained on the forehead. They are sunbeams, as it were, dispelling the darkness of ignorance, and clouds nourishing the paddy crop in the form of devotees; trees of paradise, as it were, yielding the object of one's desire; easily available for service and gratifying like Viṣṇu and Śiva; stars as it were adorning the autumnal sky in the shape of the poet's mind, and the very life's treasure for the devotees of Śrī Rāma; a rich harvest of enjoyments as it were yielded by the totality of one's meritorious deeds and sincerely devoted to the good of the world like holy men; sporting in the mind of the devotees as swans in the Mansarovar lake and purifying as the waves of the holy Gangā.

(1—7)

* Sage Agastya is said to have drunk up the ocean in three draughts. He was born of a jar; this earned him the title of 'Kumbhaja'.

दो०—कुपथ कुतरक कुचालि कलि कपट दंभ पाषंड ।
दहन राम गुन ग्राम जिमि इंधन अनल प्रचंड ॥ ३२ (क) ॥
राम चरित राकेस कर सरिस सुखद सब काहु ।
सज्जन कुमुद चकोर चित हित बिसेषि बड़ लाहु ॥ ३२ (ख) ॥

The hosts of virtues possessed by Śrī Rāma are like a blazing fire to consume the dry wood of evil ways, fallacious reasoning, mischievous practices, deceit, hypocrisy and heresy prevailing in Kali. The exploits of Śrī Rāma are delightful to one and all even as the rays of the full moon; they are particularly agreeable and highly beneficial to the mind of the virtuous, who can be compared to the white water-lily and the *Chakora** bird. (32 A—B)

चौ०—कीन्हि प्रस्न जेहि भाँति भवानी । जेहि बिधि संकर कहा बखानी ॥
सो सब हेतु कहब मैं गाई । कथा प्रबंध बिचित्र बनाई ॥ १ ॥
जेहिं यह कथा सुनी नहिं होई । जनि आचरजु करै सुनि सोई ॥
कथा अलौकिक सुनहिं जे ग्यानी । नहिं आचरजु करहिं अस जानी ॥ २ ॥
राम कथा कै मिति जग नाहीं । असि प्रतीति तिन्ह के मन माहीं ॥
नाना भाँति राम अवतारा । रामायन सत कोटि अपारा ॥ ३ ॥
कलप भेद हरि चरित सुहाए । भाँति अनेक मुनीसन्ह गाए ॥
करिअ न संसय अस उर आनी । सुनिअ कथा सादर रति मानी ॥ ४ ॥

I shall now relate at some length the seed of the story,—viz., how Goddess Bhavānī (Pārvatī) questioned Lord Śankara and how the latter answered Her questions,—weaving a strange narrative round this episode. Let no one who should happen not to have heard this anecdote before be surprised to hear it. Wise men who hear this uncommon legend marvel not; for they know there is no limit to the stories of Śrī Rama in this world. They are convinced in their heart that Śrī Rāma has bodied Himself forth in diverse ways and that the *Ramāyaṇa*, though consisting of a thousand million verses, is yet infinite. Great sages have diversely sung the charming stories of Śrī Hari, relating as they do to different Kalpas or cycles. Bearing this in mind, the reader should not entertain any doubt and should hear this narrative reverently and with devotion. (1—4)

दो०—राम अनंत अनंत गुन अमित कथा बिस्तार ।
सुनि आचरजु न मानिहहिं जिन्ह कें बिमल बिचार ॥ ३३ ॥

Rāma is infinite, infinite are His virtues and the dimensions of His story are also immeasurable. Those whose thoughts are pure will, therefore, feel no surprise when they hear it. (33)

चौ०—एहि बिधि सब संसय करि दूरी । सिर धरि गुर पद पंकज धूरी ॥
पुनि सबही बिनवउँ कर जोरी । करत कथा जेहिं लाग न खोरी ॥ १ ॥

---

* The white water-lily is proverbially noted for its attachment to the moon and is supposed to open its petals in moonlight alone. Similarly the *Chakora* is said to feed on moonbeams and supposed to be particularly enamoured of the moon.

सादर सिवहि नाइ अब माथा । बरनउँ बिसद राम गुन गाथा ॥
संबत सोरह सै एकतीसा । करउँ कथा हरि पद धरि सीसा ॥ २ ॥
नौमी भौम बार मधु मासा । अवधपुरी यह चरित प्रकासा ॥
जेहि दिन राम जनम श्रुति गावहिं । तीरथ सकल तहाँ चलि आवहिं ॥ ३ ॥
असुर नाग खग नर मुनि देवा । आइ करहिं रघुनायक सेवा ॥
जन्म महोत्सव रचहिं सुजाना । करहिं राम कल कीरति गाना ॥ ४ ॥

Putting away all doubts in this way and placing on my head the dust from the lotus feet of my preceptor, I supplicate all with joined palms once more, so that no blame may attach to the telling of the story. Reverently bowing my head to Lord Śiva, I now proceed to recount the fair virtues of Śrī Rāma. Placing my head on the feet of Śrī Hari I commence this story in the Samvat year 1631 (1574 A. D.). On Tuesday, the ninth of the lunar month of Chaitra, this story shed its lustre at Ayodhyā. On this day of Śrī Rāma's birth the presiding spirits of all holy places flock there—so declare the Vedas—and demons, Nāgas, birds, human beings, sages and gods come and pay their homage to the Lord of Raghus. Wise men celebrate the great birthday festival and sing the sweet glory of Śrī Rāma. (1—4)

दो०—मज्जहिं सज्जन बृंद बहु पावन सरजू नीर ।
जपहिं राम धरि ध्यान उर सुंदर स्याम सरीर ॥ ३४ ॥

Numerous groups of pious men take dip in the holy waters of the Sarayū river and, visualizing in their heart the beautiful swarthy form of Śrī Rāma, mutter His name. (34)

चौ०—दरस परस मज्जन अरु पाना । हरइ पाप कह बेद पुराना ॥
नदी पुनीत अमित महिमा अति । कहि न सकइ सारदा बिमलमति ॥ १ ॥
राम धामदा पुरी सुहावनि । लोक समस्त बिदित अति पावनि ॥
चारि खानि जग जीव अपारा । अवध तजें तनु नहिं संसारा ॥ २ ॥
सब बिधि पुरी मनोहर जानी । सकल सिद्धिप्रद मंगल खानी ॥
बिमल कथा कर कीन्ह अरंभा । सुनत नसाहिं काम मद दंभा ॥ ३ ॥
रामचरितमानस एहि नामा । सुनत श्रवन पाइअ बिश्रामा ॥
मन करि बिषय अनल बन जरई । होइ सुखी जौं एहिं सर परई ॥ ४ ॥
रामचरित मानस मुनि भावन । बिरचेउ संभु सुहावन पावन ॥
त्रिबिध दोष दुख दारिद दावन । कलि कुचालि कुलि कलुष नसावन ॥ ५ ॥
रचि महेस निज मानस राखा । पाइ सुसमउ सिवा सन भाषा ॥
तातें रामचरितमानस बर । धरेउ नाम हियँ हेरि हरषि हर ॥ ६ ॥
कहउँ कथा सोइ सुखद सुहाई । सादर सुनहु सुजन मन लाई ॥ ७ ॥

The very sight and touch of the Sarayū, a dip into its waters or a draught from it cleanses one's sins—so declare the Vedas and Purāṇas. Even Śāradā, the goddess of learning, with Her pure intelligence cannot describe

the infinite glory of this most sacred river. The beautiful town of Ayodhyā grants an abode in Śrī Rāma's heaven; it is celebrated through all the worlds and is the holiest of the holy. There are countless living beings in this world belonging to the four species (viz., viviparous, oviparous, sweat-born and those shooting from the earth); whoever of these shed their mortal coil in Ayodhyā are never born again. Knowing the town to be charming in every way, a bestower of all forms of success and a storehouse of blessings, I commenced writing this sacred story there. The impulses of lust, arrogance and hypocrisy positively disappear from the mind of those who hear it. One derives solace by hearing its very name, *Rāmacharitamānasa* (the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits). The elephant of our mind, which is being scorched by the wild fire of sensuous enjoyments, is sure to get relief should it drop into this lake. The holy and beautiful *Rāmacharitamānasa* is the delight of sages; it was conceived by Śambhu (Lord Śiva). It puts down the three kinds of error, sorrow and indigence* and uproots all evil practices and impurities of the Kali age. Having conceived it, the great Lord Śiva treasured it in His mind till, when a favourable opportunity presented itself, He communicated it to His consort, Śivā (Pārvatī). Therefore, after due consideration Lord Hara joyously gave it the excellent title of *Rāmacharitamānasa*†. I repeat the same delightful and charming story; hear it reverently and attentively, O noble souls. (1—7)

दो०—जस मानस जेहि बिधि भयउ जग प्रचार जेहि हेतु।
अब सोइ कहउँ प्रसंग सब सुमिरि उमा बृषकेतु ॥ ३५ ॥

Invoking Umā (goddess Pārvatī) and Lord Śiva] (who has a bull emblazoned on His standard), I now proceed to give a full account as to what this Rāmacharitamānasa is like, how it came to be and what led to its popularity in the world. (35)

चौ०—संभु प्रसाद सुमति हियँ हुलसी। रामचरितमानस कबि तुलसी॥
करइ मनोहर मति अनुहारी। सुजन सुचित सुनि लेहु सुधारी॥ १॥
सुमति भूमि थल हृदय अगाधू। बेद पुरान उदधि घन साधू॥
बरषहिं राम सुजस बर बारी। मधुर मनोहर मंगलकारी॥ २॥
लीला सगुन जो कहहिं बखानी। सोइ स्वच्छता करइ मल हानी॥
प्रेम भगति जो बरनि न जाई। सोइ मधुरता सुसीतलताई॥ ३॥
सो जल सुकृत सालि हित होई। राम भगत जन जीवन सोई॥
मेधा महि गत सो जल पावन। सकिलि श्रवन मग चलेउ सुहावन॥ ४॥
भरेउ सुमानस सुथल थिराना। सुखद सीत रुचि चारु चिराना॥ ५॥

---

* The three kinds of error are those relating to thought, word and deed; birth, death and old age constitute the three kinds of sorrow and the three kinds of indigence referred to here are: (1) poverty of body, (2) poverty in men and (3) poverty of means.

† The word 'Mānasa' also denotes the mind and Lord Śiva gave this story the title of 'Rāmacharitamānasa', firstly because it contains a life-account of Śrī Rāma and secondly because He treasured it in His *mind* before communicating it to Pārvatī.

By the grace of Śambhu (Lord Śiva) a blessed idea inspired the mind of Tulasīdāsa, which made him the author of *Rāmacharitamanasa*. The author has polished his composition to the best of his intellect; yet listen to it with a sympathetic mind, O noble souls, and correct it. A refined (Sattvic) intellect is the catchment area, heart is the fathomless depression, the Vedas and Purāṇas constitute the ocean; while holy men represent the clouds which rain down pure, sweet, agreeable and blessed water in the form of Śrī Rāma's excellent glory. Pastimes of a personal God that such holy men narrate *in extenso* are the transparency of this water, which cleanses all impurity; while loving Devotion, which defies all description, represents its sweetness and coolness. This water is beneficial for the paddy crop in the form of virtuous deeds; it is life itself to the devotees of Śrī Rāma. The same holy water, when it dropped on the soil of the intellect, flowed in a volume through the beautiful channel of the ears and, collecting in the lovely spot called the heart, came to be stationary. Having remained there for a long time, it became clear, agreeable, cool and refreshing. (1–5)

दो०—सुठि सुंदर संबाद बर बिरचे बुद्धि बिचारि ।
तेइ एहि पावन सुभग सर घाट मनोहर चारि ॥ ३६ ॥

The four most beautiful and excellent dialogues (viz., those between (i) Bhusundi and Garuḍa, (ii) Śiva and Pārvatī, (iii) Yājñavalkya and Bharadwāja and (iv) between Tulasīdāsa and other saints) that have been cleverly woven into this narrative are the four lovely Ghats of this holy and charming lake. (36)

चौ०—सप्त प्रबंध सुभग सोपाना । ग्यान नयन निरखत मन माना ॥
रघुपति महिमा अगुन अबाधा । बरनब सोइ बर बारि अगाधा ॥ १ ॥
राम सीय जस सलिल सुधासम । उपमा बीचि बिलास मनोरम ॥
पुरइनि सघन चारु चौपाई । जुगुति मंजु मनि सीप सुहाई ॥ २ ॥
छंद सोरठा सुंदर दोहा । सोइ बहुरंग कमल कुल सोहा ॥
अरथ अनूप सुभाव सुभासा । सोइ पराग मकरंद सुबासा ॥ ३ ॥
सुकृत पुंज मंजुल अलि माला । ग्यान बिराग बिचार मराला ॥
धुनि अवरेब कबित गुन जाती । मीन मनोहर ते बहुभाँती ॥ ४ ॥
अरथ धरम कामादिक चारी । कहब ग्यान बिग्यान बिचारी ॥
नव रस जप तप जोग बिरागा । ते सब जलचर चारु तड़ागा ॥ ५ ॥
सुकृती साधु नाम गुन गाना । ते बिचित्र जलबिहग समाना ॥
संतसभा चहुँ दिसि अवँराई । श्रद्धा रितु बसंत सम गाई ॥ ६ ॥
भगति निरूपन बिबिध बिधाना । छमा दया दम लता बिताना ॥
सम जम नियम फूल फल ग्याना । हरि पद रति रस बेद बखाना ॥ ७ ॥
औरउ कथा अनेक प्रसंगा । तेइ सुक पिक बहुबरन बिहंगा ॥ ८ ॥

The seven Books are the seven beautiful flights of steps, which the soul delights to look upon with the eyes of wisdom; the unqualified and unbounded greatness of Śrī Rāma, which will be presently discussed, represents the unfathomable depth of this holy water. The glory of Śrī Rāma and Sītā

constitutes the nectarean water; the similes represent the soul-ravishing sport of its wavelets. The beautiful *chaupāīs* represent the thick growth of lotus-plants; the various poetic devices constitute the lovely shells that yield beautiful pearls. The other metres, viz., Chhandas, Soraṭhās and Dohās, are the cluster of charming many-coloured lotuses. The incomparable sense, the beautiful ideas and the elegant expression represent the pollen, honey and fragrance of those flowers respectively. The virtuous acts mentioned therein are the charming swarms of bees; the references to spiritual enlightenment, dispassion and reason represent the swans. The implications and involutions and the various excellences and styles of poetry are the lovely fishes of various kinds. The four ends of human existence, viz., worldly riches, religious merit, enjoyment and liberation, the reasoned exposition of Jñāna (Knowledge of God in His absolute formless aspect) and Vijñāna (Knowledge of qualified Divinity both with and without form), the nine sentiments of poetry*, and the references to Japa (the muttering of mystic formulae), austerity, Yoga (contemplative union with God) and detachment from the world—all these represent the charming aquatic creatures of this lake. Eulogies on virtuous men, pious souls and the Name of God,—these correspond to water-birds of various kinds. The assemblages of saints referred to herein are the mango groves hemming the lake on all sides and piety has been likened to the vernal season. The exposition of the various types of Devotion and the references to forbearance, compassion and sense-control represent the canopies of creepers. Even so mind-control, the five Yamas or forms of self-restraint (viz., non-violence, truthfulness, non-thieving, continence and non-acquisition of property), the five Niyamas or religious vows (viz., those of external and internal purity, contentment, austerity, study of sacred books or repetition of the Divine Name and self-surrender to God) are the blossoms of these creepers; spiritual enlightenment is their fruit and loving devotion to the feet of Śrī Hari constitutes the sap of this fruit of spiritual enlightenment: so declare the Vedas. The various other episodes forming part of this narrative are the birds of different colours such as the parrot and the cuckoo. (1—8)

दो०—पुलक बाटिका बाग बन सुख सुबिहंग बिहारु ।
माली सुमन सनेह जल सींचत लोचन चारु ॥ ३७ ॥

The thrill of joy that one experiences while listening to this narrative represents the flower gardens, orchards and groves; and the delight one feels is the sporting of birds; while a noble mind is the gardener, who waters the garden etc. with the moisture of love through the charming jars of eyes. (37)

चौ०—जे गावहिं यह चरित सँभारे । तेइ एहि ताल चतुर रखवारे ॥
सदा सुनहिं सादर नर नारी । तेइ सुरबर मानस अधिकारी ॥ १ ॥
अति खल जे बिषई बग कागा । एहि सर निकट न जाहिं अभागा ॥
संबुक भेक सेवार समाना । इहाँ न बिषय कथा रस नाना ॥ २ ॥

* The nine sentiments of poetry are: (1) Śṛṅgāra (the erotic sentiment or the sentiment of love), (2) Hāsya (the humorous sentiment), (3) Karuṇā (the pathetic sentiment), (4) Vīra (the heroic sentiment), (5) Raudra (the sentiment of wrath or fury), (6) Bhayānaka (the sentiment of terror), (7) Bībhatsa (the sentiment of disgust), (8) Śānta (the sentiment of quietism) and (9) Adbhuta (the marvellous sentiment)

तेहि कारन आवत हियँ हारे । कामी काक बलाक बिचारे ॥
आवत एहिं सर अति कठिनाई । राम कृपा बिनु आइ न जाई ॥ ३ ॥
कठिन कुसंग कुपंथ कराला । तिन्ह के बचन बाघ हरि ब्याला ॥
गृह कारज नाना जंजाला । ते अति दुर्गम सैल बिसाला ॥ ४ ॥
बन बहु बिषम मोह मद माना । नदीं कुतर्क भयंकर नाना ॥ ५ ॥

Those who carefully recite this poem, they alone are the vigilant guardians of this lake. And those men and women who reverently hear it every day are the great gods exercising jurisdiction over this Mansarovar lake. Sensual wretches are the accursed herons and crows who never approach the lake. For here there are no varied talks of the pleasures of sense, corresponding to snails, frogs and moss. That is why poor crows and herons in the form of lustful men lack the heart to visit this place. For there is much difficulty in getting to this place and it is not possible to reach it without the grace of Śrī Rāma. Bad company, which is so obdurate, constitutes a terribly rough road; and the words of such companions are so many tigers, lions and serpents. The various occupations and entanglements of domestic life are huge mountains which are so difficult to approach. Infatuation, arrogance and pride are so many inaccessible woods; and sophisms of various kinds are frightful streams. (1—5)

दो०—जे श्रद्धा संबल रहित नहिं संतन्ह कर साथ।
तिन्ह कहुँ मानस अगम अति जिन्हहि न प्रिय रघुनाथ ॥ ३८ ॥

The Mānasa is most inaccessible to those who lack provisions for the journey in the shape of piety, who do not enjoy the company of saints and who have no love for the Lord of Raghus (Śrī Rāma). (38)

चौ०—जौं करि कष्ट जाइ पुनि कोई । जातहिं नीद जुड़ाई होई ॥
जड़ता जाड़ बिषम उर लागा । गएहुँ न मज्जन पाव अभागा ॥ १ ॥
करि न जाइ सर मज्जन पाना । फिरि आवइ समेत अभिमाना ॥
जौं बहोरि कोउ पूछन आवा । सर निंदा करि ताहि बुझावा ॥ २ ॥
सकल बिघ्न ब्यापहिं नहिं तेही । राम सुकृपाँ बिलोकहिं जेही ॥
सोइ सादर सर मज्जनु करई । महा घोर त्रय ताप न जरई ॥ ३ ॥
ते नर यह सर तजहिं न काऊ । जिन्ह कें राम चरन भल भाऊ ॥
जो नहाइ चह एहिं सर भाई । सो सतसंग करउ मन लाई ॥ ४ ॥
अस मानस मानस चख चाही । भइ कबि बुद्धि बिमल अवगाही ॥
भयउ हृदयँ आनंद उछाहू । उमगेउ प्रेम प्रमोद प्रबाहू ॥ ५ ॥
चली सुभग कबिता सरिता सो । राम बिमल जस जल भरिता सो ॥
सरजू नाम सुमंगल मूला । लोक बेद मत मंजुल कूला ॥ ६ ॥
नदी पुनीत सुमानस नंदिनि । कलि मल तृन तरु मूल निकंदिनि ॥ ७ ॥

Even if anyone makes his way to it undergoing so much hardship, he is forthwith attacked by ague in the shape of drowsiness. Benumbing cold in the shape of stupor overtakes his heart, so that the unhappy soul is deprived of a

dip even after reaching there. Finding himself unable to take a plunge into the lake or to drink from it, he returns with a feeling of pride. And if anyone comes to inquire about the lake, he tries to satisfy him by vilifying it. All these obstacles do not, however, deter him whom Śrī Rāma regards with overwhelming kindness. He alone reverently bathes in the lake and thus escapes the threefold agony* of the fiercest kind. Those men who cherish ideal devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma never quit this lake. Let him who would bathe in this lake, brother, diligently practise Satsanga (association with saints). Having seen the said Mānasa lake with the mind's eye and taken a dip into it, the poet's intellect got purged of all its dross. The heart was flooded with joy and alacrity and a torrent of love and rapture welled from it. Thence flowed a stream of beautiful poetry, carrying the water of Śrī Rāma's fair renown. Sarayū is the name of this river, which is the very fountain of pure bliss. The secular viewpoint and the viewpoint of the Vedas—these represent its two charming banks. This holy stream, issuing as it does from the beautiful Mānasa lake, uproots in its course all the impurities of the Kali age, whether in the form of tiny blades of grass or of mighty trees. (1—7)

दो०—श्रोता त्रिबिध समाज पुर ग्राम नगर दुहुँ कूल ।
संत सभा अनुपम अवध सकल सुमंगल मूल ॥ ३९ ॥

The three† types of audience are the towns, villages and cities on both the banks; and the congregation of saints is the incomparable Ayodhyā, which is the fountain of all auspicious blessings. (39)

चौ०—राम भगति सुरसरितहि जाई । मिली सुकीरति सरजु सुहाई ॥
सानुज राम समर जसु पावन । मिलेउ महानदु सोन सुहावन ॥ १ ॥
जुग बिच भगति देवधुनि धारा । सोहति सहित सुबिरति बिचारा ॥
त्रिबिध ताप त्रासक तिमुहानी । राम सरूप सिंधु समुहानी ॥ २ ॥
मानस मूल मिली सुरसरिही । सुनत सुजन मन पावन करिही ॥
बिच बिच कथा बिचित्र बिभागा । जनु सरि तीर तीर बन बागा ॥ ३ ॥
उमा महेस बिबाह बराती । ते जलचर अगनित बहु भाँती ॥
रघुबर जनम अनंद बधाई । भवँर तरंग मनोहरताई ॥ ४ ॥

The beautiful Sarayū in the form of Śrī Rāma's fair renown joined the heavenly stream (Gangā) of devotion to Rāma. The latter was joined again by the charming stream of the mighty Sone in the form of the martial glory of Rāma with His younger brother Lakṣmaṇa. Intervening the two streams of Sarayū and Sone shines the celestial stream of Devotion blended with noble dispassion and reason. This triple stream, which scares away the threefold agony referred to above, headed towards the ocean of Śrī Rāma's divine personality.

* The three kinds of agony referred to above are:
(1) that inflicted by other living beings, (ii) that proceeding from natural causes and (iii) that caused by bodily or mental distemper.

† The three types of listeners referred to here may be understood to mean (i) liberated souls, (ii) seekers of liberation and (iii) sensually-minded men.

With its source in the Mānasa lake and united with the celestial river (Gangā), the Sarayū of Śrī Rāma's fame will purify the mind of the pious souls who listen to it; while the strange episodes interspersed here and there are the groves and gardens as it were adjoining the river banks. The bridegroom's party in the wedding of Goddess Umā (Pārvatī) and the great Lord Śiva are the numberless aquatic creatures of various kinds. The rejoicings and felicitations that attended the advent of Śrī Rāma, the Chief of Raghus represent the charm of the eddies and waves. (1—4)

दो॰—बालचरित चहु बंधु के बनज बिपुल बहु रंग ।
नृप रानी परिजन सुकृत मधुकर बारिबिहंग ॥ ४० ॥

The childlike sports of the four divine brothers are the numerous lotus flowers of varied colours; while the stock of merits of King Daśaratha and his consorts and court represent the bees and water-birds. (40)

चौ॰—सीय स्वयंबर कथा सुहाई । सरित सुहावनि सो छबि छाई ॥
नदी नाव पटु प्रस्न अनेका । केवट कुसल उतर सबिबेका ॥ १ ॥
सुनि अनुकथन परस्पर होई । पथिक समाज सोह सरि सोई ॥
घोर धार भृगुनाथ रिसानी । घाट सुबद्ध राम बर बानी ॥ २ ॥
सानुज राम बिबाह उछाहू । सो सुभ उमग सुखद सब काहू ॥
कहत सुनत हरषहिं पुलकाहीं । ते सुकृती मन मुदित नहाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
राम तिलक हित मंगल साजा । परब जोग जनु जुरे समाजा ॥
काई कुमति केकई केरी । परी जासु फल बिपति घनेरी ॥ ४ ॥

The fascinating story of Sītā's choice-marriage is the delightful charm surrounding the river. The numerous pertinent questions are the boats on the river, while the judicious replies to the same are the skilled boatmen. The conversation that follows the narration of the story is the crowd of travellers moving along the river banks. The wrath of Paraśurāma (the Lord of Bhṛgus) represents the furious current of this river; while Śrī Rāma's soft words are the strongly built ghats on the banks. The festivities connected with the wedding of Śrī Rāma and His younger brothers represent the graceful swell in the river, which is a source of delight to all. Those who rejoice and experience a thrill of joy in narrating or hearing the story are the lucky souls who take an exhilarating dip in the river. The auspicious preparations that were gone through in connection with the installation of Śrī Rāma as the Yuvarāja (Prince-regent) represent as it were the crowds of bathers assembled at the river bank on a sacred occasion. Kaikeyī's evil counsel represents the moss on the bank, which brought a serious calamity in its wake. (1—4)

दो॰—समन अमित उतपात सब भरत चरित जपजाग ।
कलि अघ खल अवगुन कथन ते जल मल बग काग ॥ ४१ ॥

The story of Bharata, which wards off all calamities, is a congregational muttering of sacred formulae carried on at the river bank; while the references to

the corruptions of the Kali age and to the evil propensities of wicked souls represent the scum on the water as well as the herons and crows living by the riverside. 41

चौ०—कीरति सरित छहूँ रितु रूरी । समय सुहावनि पावनि भूरी ॥
हिम हिमसैलसुता सिव ब्याहू । सिसिर सुखद प्रभु जनम उछाहू ॥ १ ॥
बरनब राम बिबाह समाजू । सो मुद मंगलमय रितुराजू ॥
ग्रीषम दुसह राम बन गवनू । पंथ कथा खर आतप पवनू ॥ २ ॥
बरषा घोर निसाचर रारी । सुर कुल सालि सुमंगलकारी ॥
राम राज सुख बिनय बड़ाई । बिसद सुखद सोइ सरद सुहाई ॥ ३ ॥
सती सिरोमनि सिय गुन गाथा । सोइ गुन अमल अनूपम पाथा ॥
भरत सुभाउ सुसीतलताई । सदा एकरस बरनि न जाई ॥ ४ ॥

The river of Śrī Rāma's glory is delightful during all the six seasons; it is exceedingly charming and holy at all times. The wedding of Goddess Pārvatī (the daughter of Himavān) with Lord Śiva represents Hemanta or the cold season while the festival connected with the Lord's advent represents the delightful Śiśira or chilly season. The story of the preparations for Śrī Rāma's wedding constitutes the vernal season* (the king of all seasons), which abounds in joy and felicity; while Śrī Rāma's departure for the forest constitutes the oppressive hot weather and the tale of His wanderings represents the blazing sun and hot winds. The terrible conflict with the demons represents the rainy season, which constituted a veritable blessing to the paddy crop in the form of gods; while the prosperity attending Śrī Rāma's reign, His politeness and glory represent the cloudless, delightful and charming autumn. The recital of the virtues of Sītā, the crest-jewel of faithful wives, constitutes the excellence of the transparent and incomparable water. And Bharata's amiability represents its coolness, which is uniform at all times and beyond description. (1—4)

दो०—अवलोकनि बोलनि मिलनि प्रीति परसपर हास ।
भायप भलि चहु बंधु की जल माधुरी सुबास ॥ ४२ ॥

The way the four brothers look at one another, talk with one another, meet and love one another, their mirth and their ideal brotherliness—these constitute the sweetness and fragrance of the water. (42)

चौ०—आरति बिनय दीनता मोरी । लघुता ललित सुबारि न थोरी ॥
अदभुत सलिल सुनत गुनकारी । आस पिआस मनोमल हारी ॥ १ ॥

---

* The months of Mārgaśīrṣa and Pauṣa (corresponding roughly to November and December) constitute the cold season; Māgha and Phālguna (corresponding roughly to January and February) constitute the chilly season; the months of Chaitra and Vaiśākha (corresponding roughly to March and April) constitute the vernal season; Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha (corresponding roughly to May and June) constitute the hot weather; Śrāvaṇa and Bhādrapada (corresponding roughly to July and August) constitute the rainy season and Āświna and Kārtika (corresponding roughly to September and October) constitute the autumnal season.

राम सुप्रेमहि पोषत पानी। हरत सकल कलि कलुष गलानी ॥
भव श्रम सोषक तोषक तोषा। समन दुरित दुख दारिद दोषा ॥ २ ॥
काम कोह मद मोह नसावन। बिमल बिबेक बिराग बढ़ावन ॥
सादर मज्जन पान किए तें। मिटहिं पाप परिताप हिए तें ॥ ३ ॥
जिन्ह एहिं बारि न मानस धोए। ते कायर कलि काल बिगोए ॥
तृषित निरखि रबि कर भव बारी। फिरिहहिं मृग जिमि जीव दुखारी ॥ ४ ॥

My intense longing, supplication and humility represent the not inconsiderable lightness of this pure and holy water. This marvellous water heals by the mere hearing, quenches the thirst of desire and washes the dirt of the mind. This water nourishes true love for Śrī Rāma and drives away all the sins of the Kali age as well as the feeling of self-depreciation resulting therefrom. It relieves the fatigue of transmigration, gratifies gratification itself and puts an end to sin, sorrow, indigence and error. It wipes out lust, anger, pride and infatuation and enhances pure wisdom and dispassion. By reverently bathing in it, and drinking from it all traces of sin and remorse are obliterated from the heart. Those who have not washed their heart with this water are wretches that have been duped by the age of Kali. These creatures, wandering in pursuit of sensuous pleasures, will come to grief even as a thirsty deer runs after a mirage mistaking it for real water and returns disappointed.

(1—4)

दो०—मति अनुहारि सुबारि गुन गन गनि मन अन्हवाइ।
सुमिरि भवानी संकरहि कह कबि कथा सुहाइ ॥ ४३ (क) ॥
अब रघुपति पद पंकरुह हियँ धरि पाइ प्रसाद।
कहउँ जुगल मुनिबर्य कर मिलन सुभग संबाद ॥ ४३ (ख) ॥

Having enumerated the virtues of this excellent water to the best of his intellectual capacity and bathed his mind in it, and remembering Goddess Bhavānī (Pārvatī) and Lord Śankara, the poet (Tulasīdāsa) narrates the beautiful story. Installing in my heart the lotus feet of the Lord of Raghus and thus securing His grace, I now proceed to relate the charming story of the meeting of the two great sages (Yājñavalkya and Bharadwāja).

(43 A—B)

चौ०—भरद्वाज मुनि बसहिं प्रयागा। तिन्हहि राम पद अति अनुरागा ॥
तापस सम दम दया निधाना। परमारथ पथ परम सुजाना ॥ १ ॥
माघ मकरगत रबि जब होई। तीरथपतिहिं आव सब कोई ॥
देव दनुज किंनर नर श्रेनीं। सादर मज्जहिं सकल त्रिबेनीं ॥ २ ॥
पूजहिं माधव पद जलजाता। परसि अखय बटु हरषहिं गाता ॥
भरद्वाज आश्रम अति पावन। परम रम्य मुनिबर मन भावन ॥ ३ ॥
तहाँ होइ मुनि रिषय समाजा। जाहिं जे मज्जन तीरथराजा ॥
मज्जहिं प्रात समेत उछाहा। कहहिं परसपर हरि गुन गाहा ॥ ४ ॥

The sage Bharadwāja lives in Prayāga; he is extremely devoted to the feet of Śrī Rāma. A great ascetic and an embodiment of self-restraint, composure of mind and compassion, he is highly advanced on the spiritual path. In the month of Māgha, when the sun enters the sign of Capricorn, every one visits the chief of holy places, Prayāga. Troops of gods and demons, Kinnaras (demigods) and men, all devoutly bathe in the triple stream of the Gangā, Yamunā and Saraswatī. They worship the lotus feet of God Vindumādhava (the presiding deity of Prayāga); and the touch of the immortal banyan tree sends a thrill into their limbs. The hermitage of Bharadwāja is a most sacred spot, exceedingly charming and attractive even to great hermits and the haunt of sages and seers who go to bathe at that holiest of holy places. At daybreak they all perform their ablutions with religious fervour and then converse together on the virtues of Śrī Hari. (1—4)

दो०—ब्रह्म निरूपन धरम बिधि बरनहिं तत्त्व बिभाग ।
कहहिं भगति भगवंत कै संजुत ग्यान बिराग ॥ ४४ ॥

They discuss the nature of Brahma (the Supreme Eternal), the precepts of religion and the classification of fundamental entities and expatiate on Devotion to the Lord coupled with spiritual enlightenment and dispassion. (44)

चौ०—एहि प्रकार भरि माघ नहाहीं । पुनि सब निज निज आश्रम जाहीं ॥
प्रति संबत अति होइ अनंदा । मकर मज्जि गवनहिं मुनिबृंदा ॥ १ ॥
एक बार भरि मकर नहाए । सब मुनीस आश्रमन्ह सिधाए ॥
जागबलिक मुनि परम बिबेकी । भरद्वाज राखे पद टेकी ॥ २ ॥
सादर चरन सरोज पखारे । अति पुनीत आसन बैठारे ॥
करि पूजा मुनि सुजसु बखानी । बोले अति पुनीत मृदु बानी ॥ ३ ॥
नाथ एक संसउ बड़ मोरें । करगत बेदतत्त्व सबु तोरें ॥
कहत सो मोहि लागत भय लाजा । जौं न कहउँ बड़ होइ अकाजा ॥ ४ ॥

In this way they bathe for the whole month of Māgha and then return each to his hermitage. There is a great rejoicing every year and having performed their ablutions while the sun stays in Capricorn the hosts of sages disperse. Having bathed on one occasion for the whole period of the sun's stay in Capricorn when all the great sages had left for their hermitages, Bharadwāja clasped by the feet and detained the supremely wise saint Yājnavalkya. He reverently washed the latter's lotus feet and installed him on a most sacred seat. And extolling his fair renown with religious ceremony, Bharadwāja spoke in mild and reverential tones, "A grave doubt haunts my mind, holy sir! and the whole mystery of the Vedas stands revealed to you. I am afraid and ashamed to utter the doubt; and I lose a great opportunity if I keep it back. (1—4)

दो०—संत कहहिं असि नीति प्रभु श्रुति पुरान मुनि गाव ।
होइ न बिमल बिबेक उर गुर सन किएँ दुराव ॥ ४५ ॥

"The saints lay down the rule, and the Vedas as well as the Purānas and sages too loudly proclaim, that pure wisdom cannot dawn in the heart, should one keep anything concealed from one's spiritual preceptor. (45)

चौ०—अस बिचारि प्रगटउँ निज मोहू । हरहु नाथ करि जन पर छोहू ॥
राम नाम कर अमित प्रभावा । संत पुरान उपनिषद गावा ॥ १ ॥
संतत जपत संभु अबिनासी । सिव भगवान ग्यान गुन रासी ॥
आकर चारि जीव जग अहहीं । कासीं मरत परम पद लहहीं ॥ २ ॥
सोपि राम महिमा मुनिराया । सिव उपदेसु करत करि दाया ॥
रामु कवन प्रभु पूछउँ तोही । कहिअ बुझाइ कृपानिधि मोही ॥ ३ ॥
एक राम अवधेस कुमारा । तिन्ह कर चरित बिदित संसारा ॥
नारि बिरहँ दुखु लहेउ अपारा । भयउ रोषु रन रावनु मारा ॥ ४ ॥

"Remembering this I disclose my folly; dispel it, taking pity on this servant, my lord! The saints as well as the Purāṇas and the Upaniṣads too declare that the potency of the name 'Rāma' is unlimited. The immortal Lord Śiva, who is the fountain of joy and a storehouse of wisdom and goodness, incessantly repeats It. There are four broad divisions of living beings in the world; such of them as die in the holy city of Kāśī (Banaras) attain to the highest state. This too marks the glory of Śrī Rāma's Name, O chief of sages; for it is this very Name that Lord Śiva mercifully imparts to the dying soul in Kāśī. I ask you, my lord, who that Rāma is; pray explain to me, O storehouse of compassion. One such Rāma is the prince of Ayodhyā, whose exploits are known throughout the world. Infinite was his sorrow due to the loss of his wife; and flying into a rage he slew Rāvaṇa in battle. (1–4)

दो०—प्रभु सोइ राम कि अपर कोउ जाहि जपत त्रिपुरारि ।
सत्य धाम सर्बग्य तुम्ह कहहु बिबेकु बिचारि ॥ ४६ ॥

"Is it this very Rāma, my lord, or some one else whose name the Slayer of the demon Tripura, Śiva, ever repeats? You are an embodiment of truth and omniscient; so ponder well and give me your considered reply. (46)

चौ०—जैसें मिटै मोर भ्रम भारी । कहहु सो कथा नाथ बिस्तारी ॥
जागबलिक बोले मुसुकाई । तुम्हहि बिदित रघुपति प्रभुताई ॥ १ ॥
राम भगत तुम्ह मन क्रम बानी । चतुराई तुम्हारि मैं जानी ॥
चाहहु सुनै राम गुन गूढ़ा । कीन्हिहु प्रस्न मनहुँ अति मूढ़ा ॥ २ ॥
तात सुनहु सादर मनु लाई । कहउँ राम कै कथा सुहाई ॥
महामोहु महिषेसु बिसाला । राम कथा कालिका कराला ॥ ३ ॥
राम कथा ससि किरन समाना । संत चकोर करहिं जेहि पाना ॥
ऐसेइ संसय कीन्ह भवानी । महादेव तब कहा बखानी ॥ ४ ॥

"Tell me in detail, my master, the story whereby my overwhelming perplexity may be overcome." Yājñavalkya smilingly said, "The glory of the Lord of Raghus is already known to you. You are a devotee of Rāma in thought, word and deed; I have come to know your ingenuity. You wish to hear an account of the hidden virtues of Rāma; that is why you have questioned me as if you were quite ignorant. Listen, then, with devout attention, my child, while I narrate the beautiful story of Rāma. Appalling ignorance is the gigantic

demon Mahiṣāsura (so called because he was endowed with the form of a buffalo); while the narrative of Rāma is the dread Kālikā* (who made short work of the demon). The story of Rāma is like the moonbeams that are drunk in by the *chakora* bird in the form of saints. A similar doubt was expressed by no less a personage than Bhavānī (Goddess Pārvatī), and the great god Śiva then expounded the matter in detail. (1—4)

दो०—कहउँ सो मति अनुहारि अब उमा संभु संबाद ।
भयउ समय जेहि हेतु जेहि सुनु मुनि मिटिहि बिषाद ॥ ४७ ॥

I shall repeat now to the best of my lights the dialogue between Umā (Goddess Pārvatī) and Śambhu (Lord Śiva). Hear, O sage, the time and the occasion of this dialogue; your gloom will be lifted. (47)

चौ०—एक बार त्रेता जुग माहीं । संभु गए कुंभज रिषि पाहीं ॥
संग सती जगजननि भवानी । पूजे रिषि अखिलेस्वर जानी ॥ १ ॥
राम कथा मुनिबर्ज बखानी । सुनी महेस परम सुखु मानी ॥
रिषि पूछी हरि भगति सुहाई । कही संभु अधिकारी पाई ॥ २ ॥
कहत सुनत रघुपति गुन गाथा । कछु दिन तहाँ रहे गिरिनाथा ॥
मुनि सन बिदा मागि त्रिपुरारी । चले भवन सँग दच्छकुमारी ॥ ३ ॥
तेहि अवसर भंजन महि भारा । हरि रघुबंस लीन्ह अवतारा ॥
पिता बचन तजि राजु उदासी । दंडक बन बिचरत अबिनासी ॥ ४ ॥

Once upon a time, in the age of Tretā, Lord Śiva called on the jar-born sage Agastya. His consort, Goddess Satī, Mother of the universe, accompanied Him. The sage worshipped Him knowing Him to be the universal lord. The great sage narrated at length the story of Rāma and Lord Maheśa listened to it with extreme delight. The sage then inquired about Devotion to Hari and Śambhu discoursed on it finding in the sage a fit recipient. Thus narrating and hearing the tale of Śrī Rāma's virtues, the Lord of Kailāsa (Śiva) spent some days there. Finally, asking leave of the sage, the Slayer of the demon Tripura, Śankara, proceeded to His home (Mount Kailāsa) with Dakṣa's daughter (Satī). During those very days, with a view to relieving the burden of the earth, Śrī Hari had descended in the line of King Raghu. Renouncing His right to the Throne at the word of His father (Daśaratha), the immortal Lord was wandering in the Daṇḍaka forest in the garb of an ascetic. (1—4)

दो०—हृदयँ बिचारत जात हर केहि बिधि दरसनु होइ ।
गुप्त रूप अवतरेउ प्रभु गएँ जान सबु कोइ ॥ ४८ (क) ॥
सो०—संकर उर अति छोभु सती न जानहिं मरमु सोइ ।
तुलसी दरसन लोभु मन डरु लोचन लालची ॥ ४८ (ख) ॥

Lord Hara (Śiva) kept pondering as He went, "How can I obtain a sight of Him ? The Lord has bodied Himself forth secretly; and if I visit Him, everyone will know who He is." In Śankara's heart there was a great tumult;

* The story is told in *Durgā-Saptaśatī* or the *Chaṇḍī*, a work most popular with the Hindus and forming part of the *Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa*.

Satī, however, had no inkling of this secret. His mind, says Tulasīdāsa, apprehended lest the secret might be disclosed while the temptation of obtaining a sight of the Lord made His eyes wistful. (48 A—B)

चौ०—रावन मरन मनुज कर जाचा । प्रभु बिधि बचनु कीन्ह चह साचा ॥
जौं नहिं जाउँ रहइ पछितावा । करत बिचारु न बनत बनावा ॥ १ ॥
एहि बिधि भए सोचबस ईसा । तेही समय जाइ दससीसा ॥
लीन्ह नीच मारीचहि संगा । भयउ तुरत सोइ कपटकुरंगा ॥ २ ॥
करि छलु मूढ़ हरी बैदेही । प्रभु प्रभाउ तस बिदित न तेही ॥
मृग बधि बंधु सहित हरि आए । आश्रमु देखि नयन जल छाए ॥ ३ ॥
बिरह बिकल नर इव रघुराई । खोजत बिपिन फिरत दोउ भाई ॥
कबहूँ जोग बियोग न जाकें । देखा प्रगट बिरह दुखु ताकें ॥ ४ ॥

"Rāvaṇa (the demon king of Laṅkā) had sought from Brahmā the boon of death at the hands of a human foe; and the Lord would have the words of Brahmā come true. If I do not go to meet Him, I shall ever regret it." Śiva pondered, but found no solution to the puzzle. The Lord was thus lost in a reverie. Meanwhile the vile Rāvaṇa (who had no less than ten heads) took with him the demon Mārīcha, who forthwith assumed the illusory form of a deer. The fool (Rāvaṇa) carried off King Videha's daughter (Sītā) by fraud; the Lord's real might was not known to him. Having killed the antelope Śrī Hari returned with His brother (Lakṣmaṇa); and His eyes were filled with tears when He saw the empty hermitage. The Lord of Raghus felt distressed at the loss like a mortal man, and the two brothers roamed about in the woods in search of Her. He who knows neither union nor separation showed unmistakeable signs of grief born of separation. (1—4)

दो०—अति बिचित्र रघुपति चरित जानहिं परम सुजान ।
जे मतिमंद बिमोह बस हृदयँ धरहिं कछु आन ॥ ४९ ॥

Exceedingly mysterious are the ways of the Lord of Raghus; the supremely wise alone can comprehend them. The dull-witted in their height of folly imagine something quite different. (49)

चौ०—संभु समय तेहि रामहि देखा । उपजा हियँ अति हरषु बिसेषा ॥
भरि लोचन छबिसिंधु निहारी । कुसमय जानि न कीन्हि चिन्हारी ॥ १ ॥
जय सच्चिदानंद जग पावन । अस कहि चलेउ मनोज नसावन ॥
चले जात सिव सती समेता । पुनि पुनि पुलकत कृपानिकेता ॥ २ ॥
सतीं सो दसा संभु कै देखी । उर उपजा संदेहु बिसेषी ॥
संकरु जगतबंद्य जगदीसा । सुर नर मुनि सब नावत सीसा ॥ ३ ॥
तिन्ह नृपसुतहि कीन्ह परनामा । कहि सच्चिदानंद परधामा ॥
भए मगन छबि तासु बिलोकी । अजहुँ प्रीति उर रहति न रोकी ॥ ४ ॥

On that very occasion Śambhu saw Śrī Rāma and excessive joy of an extraordinary type welled up in His heart. He feasted His eyes on that Ocean of Beauty; but He did not disclose His identity as He knew it

was no appropriate occasion for the same. The Destroyer of Cupid, Śiva, passed on exclaiming: "Glory to the Redeemer of the universe, who is all Truth, Consciousness and Bliss !" As Śiva went on His way with Satī, the all-merciful Lord was repeatedly thrilled with joy. When Satī beheld Śambhu in this state, a grave doubt arose in Her mind: "Śankara is a lord of the universe Himself, and deserves universal adoration; gods, men and sages all bow their head to Him. Yet He made obeisance to this prince, referring to him as the Supreme Being who is all Truth, Consciousness and Bliss. He was enraptured to behold his beauty and felt an upsurge of emotion in His heart, which He is unable to control even to this moment! (1—4)

दो०—ब्रह्म जो ब्यापक बिरज अज अकल अनीह अभेद ।
सो कि देह धरि होइ नर जाहि न जानत बेद ॥ ५० ॥

"The Supreme Eternal, which is all-pervading, unbegotten, without parts, free from desire, beyond Māya and beyond all distinction, and which not even the Vedas can comprehend,—can It assume the shape of a man ? (50)

चौ०—बिष्नु जो सुर हित नरतनु धारी । सोउ सर्बग्य जथा त्रिपुरारी ॥
खोजइ सो कि अग्य इव नारी । ग्यानधाम श्रीपति असुरारी ॥ १ ॥
संभु गिरा पुनि मृषा न होई । सिव सर्बग्य जान सबु कोई ॥
अस संसय मन भयउ अपारा । होइ न हृदयँ प्रबोध प्रचारा ॥ २ ॥
जद्यपि प्रगट न कहेउ भवानी । हर अंतरजामी सब जानी ॥
सुनहि सती तव नारि सुभाऊ । संसय अस न धरिअ उर काऊ ॥ ३ ॥
जासु कथा कुंभज रिषि गाई । भगति जासु मैं मुनिहि सुनाई ॥
सोइ मम इष्टदेव रघुबीरा । सेवत जाहि सदा मुनि धीरा ॥ ४ ॥

"Even Viṣṇu, who takes a human form for the sake of gods, is omniscient like the Slayer of Tripura, Śiva. Can He wander in search of His Consort like an ignorant man,—He who is a repository of knowledge, the lord of Śrī (the goddess of prosperity) and the slayer of demons ? The words of Śambhu too cannot be false. Everyone knows that He is all-wise." Thus Her mind was filled with an interminable series of doubts; Her heart could not be pacified by any means. Although Bhavānī (Goddess Pārvatī) did not open Her lips, Lord Hara, who is the inner controller of all, came to know everything. "Look here, Satī, the woman is foremost in you; you should never harbour such a doubt in your mind. He is no other than Rāma, the Hero of Raghu's race, My beloved Deity, whose story was sung by the jar-born sage Agastya, faith in whom was the subject of the talk I gave to him and whom illumined sages ever wait upon. (1—4)

छं०—मुनि धीर जोगी सिद्ध संतत बिमल मन जेहि ध्यावहीं ।
कहि नेति निगम पुरान आगम जासु कीरति गावहीं ॥
सोइ रामु ब्यापक ब्रह्म भुवन निकाय पति माया धनी ।
अवतरेउ अपने भगत हित निजतंत्र नित रघुकुलमनी ॥

"He who has bodied Himself forth as the Jewel of Raghu's race for the sake of His devotees is no other than the Supreme Eternal, who is all-pervading and ever free, who is the Ruler of all the worlds and the Lord of Māyā, whom illumined sages, Yogīs (mystics) and Siddhas (adepts) constantly meditate upon with their sinless mind and whose glory is sung by the Vedas as well as the Purāṇas and other scriptures in negative terms as 'not this'."

सो०—लाग न उर उपदेसु जदपि कहेउ सिवँ बार बहु ।
बोले बिहसि महेसु हरि माया बलु जानि जियँ ॥ ५१ ॥

Although Lord Śiva repeated this time after time, His exhortation made no impression on the heart of Satī. Then the great Lord Śiva smilingly said, realizing in His heart the potency of Śrī Hari's Māyā:— (51)

चौ०—जौं तुम्हरें मन अति संदेहू । तौ किन जाइ परीछा लेहू ॥
तब लगि बैठ अहउँ बट छाहीं । जब लगि तुम्ह ऐहहु मोहि पाहीं ॥ १ ॥
जैसें जाइ मोह भ्रम भारी । करेहु सो जतनु बिबेक बिचारी ॥
चलीं सती सिव आयसु पाई । करहिं बिचारु करौं का भाई ॥ २ ॥
इहाँ संभु अस मन अनुमाना । दच्छसुता कहुँ नहिं कल्याना ॥
मोरेहु कहें न संसय जाहीं । बिधि बिपरीत भलाई नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
होइहि सोइ जो राम रचि राखा । को करि तर्क बढ़ावै साखा ॥
अस कहि लगे जपन हरि नामा । गईं सती जहँ प्रभु सुखधामा ॥ ४ ॥

"If you have a grave doubt in your mind, why not go and verify the thing? I shall be waiting in the shade of this banyan tree till you come back to Me. Using your critical judgment you should resort to some device whereby the stupendous error born of your ignorance may be rectified." Thus obtaining leave of Śiva, Satī proceeded on Her mission. She racked Her brains to find out what step She should take (in order to test the divinity of Rāma). On this side Śiva came to the conclusion that mischief was in store for Dakṣa's daughter (Satī). "When her doubt did not yield even to My assurances," He said to Himself, "it seems the stars are unpropitious to her and no good will come out of it. After all, whatever Śrī Rāma has willed must come to pass; why should one add to the complication by indulging in further speculation?" So saying, Lord Śiva began to mutter the name of Śrī Hari; while Satī proceeded to the spot where the all-blissful Lord (Śrī Rāma) was. (1—4)

दो०—पुनि पुनि हृदयँ बिचारु करि धरि सीता कर रूप ।
आगें होइ चलि पंथ तेहिं जेहिं आवत नरभूप ॥ ५२ ॥

After many an anxious thought Satī assumed the form of Sītā and moved ahead on the same route along which the Ruler of men (Śrī Rāma) was passing. (52)

चौ०—लछिमन दीख उमाकृत बेषा । चकित भए भ्रम हृदयँ बिसेषा ॥
कहि न सकत कछु अति गंभीरा । प्रभु प्रभाउ जानत मतिधीरा ॥ १ ॥

सती कपटु जानेउ सुरस्वामी । सबदरसी सब अंतरजामी ॥
सुमिरत जाहि मिटइ अग्याना । सोइ सरबग्य रामु भगवाना ॥ २ ॥
सती कीन्ह चह तहँहुँ दुराऊ । देखहु नारि सुभाव प्रभाऊ ॥
निज माया बलु हृदयँ बखानी । बोले बिहसि रामु मृदु बानी ॥ ३ ॥
जोरि पानि प्रभु कीन्ह प्रनामू । पिता समेत लीन्ह निज नामू ॥
कहेउ बहोरि कहाँ बृषकेतू । बिपिन अकेलि फिरहु केहि हेतू ॥ ४ ॥

When Lakṣmaṇa saw Umā (Satī) in Her disguise, he was astonished and much puzzled. He was tongue-tied and looked very grave; the sagacious brother was acquainted with the Lord's glory. All-perceiving and the inner controller of all, the lord of gods, Śrī Rāma, took no time in detecting the false appearance of Satī. Rāma was the same omniscient Lord whose very thought wipes out ignorance. Satī sought to practise deception even on Him: see how deep-rooted the nature of a woman is! Extolling in His heart the potency of His Māyā (delusive power), Śrī Rāma smilingly accosted Her in a mild tone. Joining the palms of His hands, He first made obeisance to Her mentioning His name along with His father's. He then asked Her the whereabouts of Lord Śiva (who has a bull emblazoned on His standard) and wondered what made Her roam about all alone in the forest. (1—4)

दो०—राम बचन मृदु गूढ़ सुनि उपजा अति संकोचु ।
सती सभीत महेस पहिं चलीं हृदयँ बड़ सोचु ॥ ५३ ॥

Satī felt very uncomfortable when She heard these soft yet significant words of Rāma. She turned towards the great Lord Śiva with a feeling of awe and much dejected at heart. (53)

चौ०—मैं संकर कर कहा न माना । निज अग्यानु राम पर आना ॥
जाइ उतरु अब देहउँ काहा । उर उपजा अति दारुन दाहा ॥ १ ॥
जाना राम सतीं दुखु पावा । निज प्रभाउ कछु प्रगटि जनावा ॥
सतीं दीख कौतुकु मग जाता । आगें रामु सहित श्री भ्राता ॥ २ ॥
फिरि चितवा पाछें प्रभु देखा । सहित बंधु सिय सुंदर बेषा ॥
जहँ चितवहिं तहँ प्रभु आसीना । सेवहिं सिद्ध मुनीस प्रबीना ॥ ३ ॥
देखे सिव बिधि बिष्नु अनेका । अमित प्रभाउ एक तें एका ॥
बंदत चरन करत प्रभु सेवा । बिबिध बेष देखे सब देवा ॥ ४ ॥

"I heeded not the words of Śankara and imposed My own ignorance on Rāma. What reply shall I give to my lord now?" The agony of Her heart was most terrible. Śrī Rāma perceived that Satī had got vexed; He, therefore, revealed to Her a part of His glory. As She went on Her way Satī beheld a strange phenomenon. Rāma was going ahead of Her along with His Consort, Sītā, and His younger brother, Lakṣmaṇa. She looked back and there too She saw the Lord with His brother and Sītā in an attractive garb. Whichever way She turned Her eyes, there was the Lord enthroned with the Siddhas (adepts) and illumined sages ministering to Him. Satī saw more than one sets of Śiva,

Brahmā and Viṣṇu, each set possessing a glory infinitely greater than that of the others. She also beheld a whole host of gods bowing at the Lord's feet and waiting upon Him in their different garbs. (1—4)

दो०—सती बिधात्री इंदिरा देखीं अमित अनूप ।
जेहिं जेहिं बेष अजादि सुर तेहि तेहि तन अनुरूप ॥ ५४ ॥

She further perceived innumerable Satīs (consorts of Śiva), consorts of Brahmā and Lakṣmīs (consorts of Viṣṇu), all peerless in beauty. They conformed in their appearance to the garb in which Brahmā and the other gods appeared. (54)

चौ०—देखे जहँ तहँ रघुपति जेते । सक्तिन्ह सहित सकल सुर तेते ॥
जीव चराचर जो संसारा । देखे सकल अनेक प्रकारा ॥ १ ॥
पूजहिं प्रभुहि देव बहु बेषा । राम रूप दूसर नहिं देखा ॥
अवलोके रघुपति बहुतेरे । सीता सहित न बेष घनेरे ॥ २ ॥
सोइ रघुबर सोइ लछिमनु सीता । देखि सती अति भईं सभीता ॥
हृदय कंप तन सुधि कछु नाहीं । नयन मूदि बैठीं मग माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
बहुरि बिलोकेउ नयन उघारी । कछु न दीख तहँ दच्छकुमारी ॥
पुनि पुनि नाइ राम पद सीसा । चलीं तहाँ जहँ रहे गिरीसा ॥ ४ ॥

Each separate vision of Rāma was attended by a whole host of gods with their feminine counterparts, as well as by the whole animate and inanimate creation with its multitudinous species. But while the gods who adored the Lord appeared in diverse garbs, the appearance of Śrī Rāma was the same in every case. Although She saw many Rāmas with as many Sītās, their garb did not vary. Seeing the same Rāma, the same Lakṣmaṇa and the same Sītā, Satī was struck with great awe. Her heart quivered, and She lost all consciousness of Her body. Closing Her eyes She sat down on the wayside. When She opened Her eyes and gazed once more, the daughter of Dakṣa saw nothing there. Repeatedly bowing Her head at the feet of Śrī Rāma, She proceeded to the spot where the Lord of Kailāsa was. (1—4)

चौ०—गईं समीप महेस तब हँसि पूछी कुसलात ।
लीन्हि परीछा कवन बिधि कहहु सत्य सब बात ॥ ५५ ॥

When She came near, Lord Śiva smilingly inquired if all was well with Her and then said, "Tell me now the whole truth, how did you test Śrī Rāma ?" (55)

[PAUSE 2 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—सतीं समुझि रघुबीर प्रभाऊ । भय बस सिव सन कीन्ह दुराऊ ॥
कछु न परीछा लीन्हि गोसाईं । कीन्ह प्रनामु तुम्हारिहि नाईं ॥ १ ॥
जो तुम्ह कहा सो मृषा न होई । मोरें मन प्रतीति अति सोई ॥
तब संकर देखेउ धरि ध्याना । सतीं जो कीन्ह चरित सबु जाना ॥ २ ॥

बहुरि राम मायहि सिरु नावा । प्रेरि सतिहि जेहिं झूँठ कहावा ॥
हरि इच्छा भावी बलवाना । हृदयँ बिचारत संभु सुजाना ॥ ३ ॥
सतीं कीन्ह सीता कर बेषा । सिव उर भयउ बिषाद बिसेषा ॥
जौं अब करउँ सती सन प्रीती । मिटइ भगति पथु होइ अनीती ॥ ४ ॥

Having realized the greatness of the Hero of Raghu's race, Satī in Her awe concealed the truth from Śiva. "I made no test, my lord; I made obeisance just like You. What You said cannot be untrue; I am fully convinced in my heart." Lord Śankara then looked within by contemplation and came to know all that Satī had done. Again, He bowed His head to the delusive power of Śrī Rāma, that had prompted Satī to tell a lie. What has been preordained by the will of Śrī Hari must have its way, the all-wise Śambhu thought within Himself. Satī had assumed the disguise of Sītā: this made Śiva much disconsolate at heart. "If I continue to love Satī as heretofore, the cult of Devotion will disappear and it will be indecorous on My part to do so. (1—4)

दो०—परम पुनीत न जाइ तजि किएँ प्रेम बड़ पापु ।
प्रगटि न कहत महेसु कछु हृदयँ अधिक संतापु ॥ ५६ ॥

"Satī is too chaste to be abandoned, and it is a great sin to love her any more as a wife." The great Lord Śiva uttered not a word aloud, although there was great agony in His heart. (56)

चौ०—तब संकर प्रभु पद सिरु नावा । सुमिरत रामु हृदयँ अस आवा ॥
एहिं तन सतिहि भेट मोहि नाहीं । सिव संकल्पु कीन्ह मन माहीं ॥ १ ॥
अस बिचारि संकरु मतिधीरा । चले भवन सुमिरत रघुबीरा ॥
चलत गगन भै गिरा सुहाई । जय महेस भलि भगति दृढ़ाई ॥ २ ॥
अस पन तुम्ह बिनु करइ को आना । राम भगत समरथ भगवाना ॥
सुनि नभगिरा सती उर सोचा । पूछा सिवहि समेत सकोचा ॥ ३ ॥
कीन्ह कवन पन कहहु कृपाला । सत्यधाम प्रभु दीनदयाला ॥
जदपि सतीं पूछा बहु भाँती । तदपि न कहेउ त्रिपुर आराती ॥ ४ ॥

Then Śankara bowed His head at the feet of the Lord; and as soon as He invoked Śrī Rāma the idea came to His mind that He should have no connection with Satī so long as she continued to remain in that body. Śiva resolved accordingly and having so resolved the stable-minded Lord Śankara proceeded towards His home (Mount Kailāsa) with His mind fixed on the Hero of Raghu's race. Even as He stepped forward a charming voice from heaven thundered forth : "Glory to the great Lord Śiva, who has so staunchly upheld the cause of Devotion. Who else than You can take such a vow ? You are a devotee of Śrī Rāma and the all-powerful Lord at the same time." Satī felt troubled at heart when She heard the heavenly voice. She addressed Śiva in a faltering voice, "Tell me, O merciful Lord ! what vow You have taken. You are an embodiment of Truth and compassionate to the poor." Even though Satī inquired in ways more than one, the Slayer of the demon Tripura, Śankara, spoke not a word. (1—4)

दो०—सतीं हृदयँ अनुमान किय सबु जानेउ सर्बग्य ।
कीन्ह कपटु मैं संभु सन नारि सहज जड़ अग्य ॥ ५७ (क)॥

Satī concluded that the omniscient Lord had come to know everything and felt sorry that She had tried to deceive Śambhu. The woman is silly and stupid by nature, She realized. (57 A)

सो०—जलु पय सरिस बिकाइ देखहु प्रीति कि रीति भलि ।
बिलग होइ रसु जाइ कपट खटाई परत पुनि ॥ ५७ (ख)॥

Even water (when mixed with milk) sells as milk: look at the unifying process of love. The water, however, is separated from the milk and the taste also disappears the moment a drop of acid is introduced into it in the form of a falsehood. (57 B)

चौ०—हृदयँ सोचु समुझत निज करनी । चिंता अमित जाइ नहिं बरनी ॥
कृपासिंधु सिव परम अगाधा । प्रगट न कहेउ मोर अपराधा ॥ १ ॥
संकर रुख अवलोकि भवानी । प्रभु मोहि तजेउ हृदयँ अकुलानी ॥
निज अघ समुझि न कछु कहि जाई । तपइ अवाँ इव उर अधिकाई ॥ २ ॥
सतिहि ससोच जानि बृषकेतू । कहीं कथा सुंदर सुख हेतू ॥
बरनत पंथ बिबिध इतिहासा । बिस्वनाथ पहुँचे कैलासा ॥ ३ ॥
तहँ पुनि संभु समुझि पन आपन । बैठे बट तर करि कमलासन ॥
संकर सहज सरूपु सम्हारा । लागि समाधि अखंड अपारा ॥ ४ ॥

Satī felt perturbed in Her heart at the thought of what She had done; and the extent of Her anxiety could neither be gauged nor described. She realized that Lord Śiva is a supremely unfathomable ocean of mercy, hence He did not openly declare Her fault. From the attitude of Śankara, however, She judged that the Lord had abandoned Her, and felt disturbed in Her heart. Conscious of Her guilt She could not utter a word of protest; but all the while Her heart smouldered like a furnace. Perceiving the sad look of Satī, Śiva (who has a bull emblazoned on His standard) narrated beautiful stories in order to divert Her mind. Relating various legends while on His way, the Lord of the universe, Śiva, reached Kailāsa. Then, recalling His vow, Śambhu sat down there under a banyan tree in the Yogic pose known as Padmāsana (the pose of a lotus). Śankara communed with His own Self and passed into an unbroken and indefinitely long Samādhi (trance). (1–4)

दो०—सती बसहिं कैलास तब अधिक सोचु मन माहिं ।
मरमु न कोऊ जान कछु जुग सम दिवस सिराहिं ॥ ५८ ॥

Then Satī dwelt in Kailāsa, Her mind grievously sorrowing. Nobody knew anything about what was going on in Her mind; but the days hung heavy on Her like so many Yugas or ages. (58)

चौ०—नित नव सोचु सती उर भारा। कब जैहउँ दुख सागर पारा॥
मैं जो कीन्ह रघुपति अपमाना। पुनि पति बचनु मृषा करि जाना॥ १॥
सो फलु मोहि बिधाताँ दीन्हा। जो कछु उचित रहा सोइ कीन्हा॥
अब बिधि अस बूझिअ नहिं तोही। संकर बिमुख जिआवसि मोही॥ २॥
कहि न जाइ कछु हृदय गलानी। मन महुँ रामहि सुमिर सयानी॥
जौं प्रभु दीनदयालु कहावा। आरति हरन बेद जसु गावा॥ ३॥
तौ मैं बिनय करउँ कर जोरी। छूटउ बेगि देह यह मोरी॥
जौं मोरें सिव चरन सनेहू। मन क्रम बचन सत्य ब्रतु एहू॥ ४॥

The grief that preyed on Satī's mind was ever new; for She did not know when She would be able to cross the ocean of sorrow. "I slighted the Lord of Raghus and again took my husband's words to be untrue; Providence has repaid me for my sins and has done only that which I deserved. Now, O God, it does not behove you that you should make me survive even after alienating me from Śankara." The anguish of Her heart was beyond words. The sane lady invoked the presence of Rāma in Her heart and addressed Him thus; "If they refer to You as compassionate to the poor, and if the Vedas have glorified You as the dispeller of sorrow, I beseech with joined palms, O Lord, that I may be speedily rid of this body of mine. If I have any devotion to the feet of Śiva and if I am true to my vow in thought, word and deed,— (1–4)

दो०—तौ सबदरसी सुनिअ प्रभु करउ सो बेगि उपाइ।
होइ मरनु जेहिं बिनहिं श्रम दुसह बिपत्ति बिहाइ॥ ५९॥

"Then, O all-perceiving Lord, listen to me and speedily devise some plan whereby I may die and be thus rid of this unbearable calamity without much exertion." (59)

चौ०—एहि बिधि दुखित प्रजेसकुमारी। अकथनीय दारुन दुखु भारी॥
बीतें संबत सहस सतासी। तजी समाधि संभु अबिनासी॥ १॥
राम नाम सिव सुमिरन लागे। जानेउ सतीं जगतपति जागे॥
जाइ संभु पद बंदनु कीन्हा। सनमुख संकर आसनु दीन्हा॥ २॥
लगे कहन हरिकथा रसाला। दच्छ प्रजेस भए तेहि काला॥
देखा बिधि बिचारि सब लायक। दच्छहि कीन्ह प्रजापति नायक॥ ३॥
बड़ अधिकार दच्छ जब पावा। अति अभिमानु हृदयँ तब आवा॥
नहिं कोउ अस जनमा जग माहीं। प्रभुता पाइ जाहि मद नाहीं॥ ४॥

The daughter of Dakṣa, Satī, thus felt very miserable. Her deep agony was terrible beyond words. When eighty-seven thousand years elapsed, the immortal Śambhu emerged from His trance. Śiva started repeating the name of Rāma; then Satī came to know that the Lord of the universe had come to the waking state. She went and bowed at the feet of Śambhu. Śankara gave Her a seat opposite Himself. He began to narrate the delightful stories of Śrī Hari. Meanwhile Dakṣa (Satī's father) had come to be the lord of created beings. On careful consideration the Creator (Brahmā) found Dakṣa qualified in every way and appointed him as the supreme lord of created beings. When Dakṣa attained this high position, the pride of his heart knew no bounds. Never was a creature born in this world, whom power did not intoxicate. (1–4)

दो०—दच्छ लिए मुनि बोलि सब करन लगे बड़ जाग ।
नेवते सादर सकल सुर जे पावत मख भाग ॥ ६० ॥

Dakṣa got together all the sages and they began to perform a big sacrifice. All the gods who obtain a share of the oblations offered at a sacrifice were cordially invited to attend. (60)

चौ०—किंनर नाग सिद्ध गंधर्बा । बधुन्ह समेत चले सुर सर्बा ॥
बिष्नु बिरंचि महेसु बिहाई । चले सकल सुर जान बनाई ॥ १ ॥
सतीं बिलोके ब्योम बिमाना । जात चले सुंदर बिधि नाना ॥
सुर सुंदरीं करहिं कल गाना । सुनत श्रवन छूटहिं मुनि ध्याना ॥ २ ॥
पूछेउ तब सिवँ कहेउ बखानी । पिता जग्य सुनि कछु हरषानी ॥
जौं महेसु मोहि आयसु देहीं । कछु दिन जाइ रहौं मिस एहीं ॥ ३ ॥
पति परित्याग हृदयँ दुखु भारी । कहइ न निज अपराध बिचारी ॥
बोली सती मनोहर बानी । भय संकोच प्रेम रस सानी ॥ ४ ॥

Kinnaras (a species of demigods), Nāgas, Siddhas (a class of celestial beings) and Gandharvas (celestial songsters) and the whole host of gods proceeded to the sacrifice along with their wives. All the gods with the exception of Viṣṇu, Virañchi (the Creator) and the great Lord Śiva, set out in their aerial cars. Satī beheld beautiful aerial cars of various patterns coursing through the air. Celestial damsels were singing melodious strains, which intruded upon the ears of ascetics and broke their meditation. When Satī inquired about the stir in the air, Śiva explained the whole thing. She was somewhat delighted to hear of the sacrifice commenced by Her father and thought of making it an excuse for staying a few days with Her father in case the great Lord Śiva granted Her leave. Repudiation by Her lord tormented Her heart not a little; but conscious of Her guilt She would not utter a word. At last Satī spoke in a charming voice tinged with awe, misgiving and affection:— (1—4)

दो०—पिता भवन उत्सव परम जौं प्रभु आयसु होइ ।
तौ मैं जाउँ कृपायतन सादर देखन सोइ ॥ ६१ ॥

"There is great rejoicing at my father's house, O Lord. If You grant me leave, I would fain go and see it, O storehouse of compassion." (61)

चौ०—कहेहु नीक मोरेहुँ मन भावा । यह अनुचित नहिं नेवत पठावा ॥
दच्छ सकल निज सुता बोलाईं । हमरें बयर तुम्हउ बिसराईं ॥ १ ॥
ब्रह्मसभाँ हम सन दुखु माना । तेहि तें अजहुँ करहिं अपमाना ॥
जौं बिनु बोलें जाहु भवानी । रहइ न सीलु सनेहु न कानी ॥ २ ॥
जदपि मित्र प्रभु पितु गुर गेहा । जाइअ बिनु बोलेहुँ न सँदेहा ॥
तदपि बिरोध मान जहँ कोई । तहाँ गएँ कल्यानु न होई ॥ ३ ॥
भाँति अनेक संभु समुझावा । भावी बस न ग्यानु उर आवा ॥
कह प्रभु जाहु जो बिनहिं बोलाएँ । नहिं भलि बात हमारे भाएँ ॥ ४ ॥

Lord Śiva replied, "Your suggestion is good and has commended itself to Me as well. But the anomaly is that Your father has sent no invitation to us. Dakṣa has invited all his other daughters; but because of the grudge he bears to us you too have been ignored. In the court of Brahmā he once took offence at our behaviour; that is why he insults us even now. If you go there uninvited, Bhavānī, all decorum, affection and honour will be cast to the winds. It is no doubt true one should call on one's friend, master, father or teacher without waiting for a formal invitation; yet where someone nurses a grudge against you, you reap no good by going there." Śambhu expostulated with Satī in so many ways; but as fate had willed it wisdom would not dawn on Her. The Lord repeated once more that if She went to Her father's place uninvited, He anticipated no good results from it. (1–4)

दो०—कहि देखा हर जतन बहु रहइ न दच्छकुमारि।
दिए मुख्य गन संग तब बिदा कीन्ह त्रिपुरारि ॥ ६२ ॥

Having reasoned with Her in ways more than one when Hara at last perceived that the daughter of Dakṣa was not going to stay, the Slayer of Tripura detailed a few of His principal attendants as Her escort and sent Her away. (62)

चौ०—पिता भवन जब गईं भवानी। दच्छ त्रास काहुँ न सनमानी ॥
सादर भलेहिं मिली एक माता। भगिनीं मिलीं बहुत मुसुकाता ॥ १ ॥
दच्छ न कछु पूछी कुसलाता। सतिहि बिलोकि जरे सब गाता ॥
सतीं जाइ देखेउ तब जागा। कतहुँ न दीख संभु कर भागा ॥ २ ॥
तब चित चढ़ेउ जो संकर कहेऊ। प्रभु अपमानु समुझि उर दहेऊ ॥
पाछिल दुखु न हृदयँ अस ब्यापा। जस यह भयउ महा परितापा ॥ ३ ॥
जद्यपि जग दारुन दुख नाना। सब तें कठिन जाति अवमाना ॥
समुझि सो सतिहि भयउ अति क्रोधा। बहु बिधि जननीं कीन्ह प्रबोधा ॥ ४ ॥

When Bhavānī (etymologically, the Consort of Bhava, an epithet of Śiva) reached Her father's house, no one greeted Her for fear of incurring Dakṣa's displeasure. Her mother was the solitary figure who met Her kindly. Her sisters received Her with profuse smiles. Dakṣa would not even inquire about Her health; he burnt all over with rage at the very sight of Satī. Satī then went to have a look at the sacrifice; but nowhere did She find any share of oblations set apart for Śambhu. Then did She realize the force of Śankara's warning; Her heart burnt within Her at the thought of the insult offered to Her lord. The former grief (that of repudiation by Her lord) did not torment Her heart so much as the great agony She now felt (as a result of the insult offered to Her husband) Although there are terrible agonies of various kinds in this world, the insult offered to one's own people is the most painful of them all. The thought of the same made Satī furious. Her mother tried to pacify Her in many ways. (1–4)

दो०—सिव अपमानु न जाइ सहि हृदयँ न होइ प्रबोध।
सकल सभहि हठि हटकि तब बोलीं बचन सक्रोध ॥ ६३ ॥

The insult to Śiva was something unbearable; Her heart could not, therefore, be pacified. Then, sharply reproaching the whole assembly, She spoke in angry accents:— (63)

चौ०—सुनहु सभासद सकल मुनिंदा । कही सुनी जिन्ह संकर निंदा ॥
सो फलु तुरत लहब सब काहूँ । भली भाँति पछिताब पिताहूँ ॥ १ ॥
संत संभु श्रीपति अपबादा । सुनिअ जहाँ तहँ असि मरजादा ॥
काटिअ तासु जीभ जो बसाई । श्रवन मूदि न त चलिअ पराई ॥ २ ॥
जगदातमा महेसु पुरारी । जगत जनक सब के हितकारी ॥
पिता मंदमति निंदत तेही । दच्छ सुक्र संभव यह देही ॥ ३ ॥
तजिहउँ तुरत देह तेहि हेतू । उर धरि चंद्रमौलि बृषकेतू ॥
अस कहि जोग अगिनि तनु जारा । भयउ सकल मख हाहाकारा ॥ ४ ॥

"Hear ye elders of the assembly and all great sages! All of you who have reviled Śankara or heard Him reviled must forthwith reap the fruit of your sin and My father too shall fully repent. Wherever you hear a saint, Śambhu or Viṣṇu (the Lord of Lakṣmī) vilified, the rule is that if it lies within your power you should tear out the tongue of the reviler or you should run away closing your ears. The Slayer of Tripura, the great Lord Śiva, is the universal Spirit; He is the father of the universe and is beneficent to all. It is Him that my stupid father vilifies; and this body of Mine has sprung from the loins of Dakṣa. Therefore, installing in My heart Lord Śiva, who bears the moon on His forehead and a bull as His emblem, I shall immediately quit this body." As She spoke thus She burnt Her body with the fire of Yoga.* A plaintive cry rose from the whole assembly. (1—4)

दो०—सती मरनु सुनि संभु गन लगे करन मख खीस ।
जग्य बिधंस बिलोकि भृगु रच्छा कीन्हि मुनीस ॥ ६४ ॥

Hearing of Satī's death, the attendants of Śambhu began to destroy the sacrifice. Seeing the sacrifice being destroyed, the great sage Bhṛgu protected it. (64)

चौ०—समाचार सब संकर पाए । बीरभद्रु करि कोप पठाए ॥
जग्य बिधंस जाइ तिन्ह कीन्हा । सकल सुरन्ह बिधिवत फलु दीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
भै जगबिदित दच्छ गति सोई । जसि कछु संभु बिमुख कै होई ॥
यह इतिहास सकल जग जानी । ताते मैं संछेप बखानी ॥ २ ॥
सतीं मरत हरि सन बरु मागा । जनम जनम सिव पद अनुरागा ॥
तेहि कारन हिमगिरि गृह जाई । जनमीं पारबती तनु पाई ॥ ३ ॥
जब तें उमा सैल गृह जाईं । सकल सिद्धि संपति तहँ छाईं ॥
जहँ तहँ मुनिन्ह सुआश्रम कीन्हे । उचित बास हिमभूधर दीन्हे ॥ ४ ॥

Śankara got all the news and in His wrath He sent Vīrabhadra. Going there the latter made havoc of the sacrifice and requited all the gods according to their deserts. As is well-known to the world, Dakṣa met the same fate which an opponent of Śambhu generally meets. The story is known

* Fire produced by Yogis through the friction of the vital airs within the body.

throughout the world; that is why I have told it in brief. While dying, Satī asked a boon of Śrī Hari that She might remain devoted to the feet of Śiva in all successive births. That is why She was reborn as Pārvatī (*lit.* daughter of a mountain) in the house of Himāchala (the deity presiding over the Himālaya mountain). Ever since Umā was born in the house of Himālaya the mountain became an abode of all blessings and prosperity. Sages built beautiful hermitages here and there and Himālaya assigned them suitable abodes (in the form of caves etc.).

(1–4)

दो०—सदा सुमन फल सहित सब द्रुम नव नाना जाति ।
प्रगटीं सुंदर सैल पर मनि आकर बहु भाँति ॥ ६५ ॥

Young trees of different varieties were endowed with never-failing blossoms and fruits, and mines of jewels of various kinds appeared on the beautiful mountain. (65)

चौ०—सरिता सब पुनीत जलु बहहीं । खग मृग मधुप सुखी सब रहहीं ॥
सहज बयरु सब जीवन्ह त्यागा । गिरि पर सकल करहिं अनुरागा ॥ १ ॥
सोह सैल गिरिजा गृह आएँ । जिमि जनु रामभगति के पाएँ ॥
नित नूतन मंगल गृह तासू । ब्रह्मादिक गावहिं जसु जासू ॥ २ ॥
नारद समाचार सब पाए । कौतुकहीं गिरि गेह सिधाए ॥
सैलराज बड़ आदर कीन्हा । पद पखारि बर आसनु दीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
नारि सहित मुनि पद सिरु नावा । चरन सलिल सबु भवनु सिंचावा ॥
निज सौभाग्य बहुत गिरि बरना । सुता बोलि मेली मुनि चरना ॥ ४ ॥

All the rivers bore holy waters; birds, beasts and bees, all rejoiced. All animals gave up their natural antipathies and all those who dwelt on the mountain loved one another. With the advent of Girijā (a synonym of Pārvatī) the mountain (Himālaya) wore a cheerful look even as devotion to Śrī Rāma lights up the face of a devotee. Every day brought a new delight to the house of Himāchala, whose glory was sung even by great gods like Brahmā (the Creator). Receiving all the news Nārada eagerly went to the house of Himāchala. The king of mountains (the presiding deity of the Himālayas), received him with great honour; washing the sage's feet he led him to a beautiful seat. He bowed his head at the sage's feet along with his wife and had his whole mansion sprinkled with the water hallowed by his feet. Himāchala extolled his own good luck and, summoning his daughter, placed her at the sage's feet.

(1–4)

दो०—त्रिकालग्य सर्बग्य तुम्ह गति सर्बत्र तुम्हारि ।
कहहु सुता के दोष गुन मुनिबर हृदयँ बिचारि ॥ ६६ ॥

"You know everything, including the past, present and future, and have access everywhere. Therefore, O good sage, tell me what is good and what is bad about my daughter after a mature consideration." (66)

चौ०—कह मुनि बिहसि गूढ़ मृदु बानी। सुता तुम्हारि सकल गुन खानी॥
सुंदर सहज सुसील सयानी। नाम उमा अंबिका भवानी॥ १॥
सब लच्छन संपन्न कुमारी। होइहि संतत पियहि पिआरी॥
सदा अचल एहि कर अहिवाता। एहि तें जसु पैहहिं पितु माता॥ २॥
होइहि पूज्य सकल जग माहीं। एहि सेवत कछु दुर्लभ नाहीं॥
एहि कर नामु सुमिरि संसारा। त्रिय चढ़िहहिं पतिब्रत असिधारा॥ ३॥
सैल सुलच्छन सुता तुम्हारी। सुनहु जे अब अवगुन दुइ चारी॥
अगुन अमान मातु पितु हीना। उदासीन सब संसय छीना॥ ४॥

The sage smilingly replied in the following soft yet significant words: "Your daughter is a mine of all virtues—pretty, amiable and intelligent by nature. She will be called Umā, Ambikā (*lit.*, mother) and Bhavānī. Adorned with all good traits, the girl shall win the unfailing love of her husband. She shall remain ever united with her lord and bring glory to her parents. She shall command the respect of the whole universe; he who waits upon her shall lack nothing. By the mere thought of her name women in this world shall be enabled to tread the path of fidelity to their lord, which is sharp as the edge of a sword. Your daughter, O Himālaya, is endowed with auspicious marks. Hear now the few drawbacks she possesses. Devoid of merits, free from pride, without father or mother, unconcerned and free from doubts,—(1—4)

दो०—जोगी जटिल अकाम मन नगन अमंगल बेष।
अस स्वामी एहि कहँ मिलिहि परी हस्त असि रेख॥ ६७॥

"An ascetic with matted hair and a heart devoid of longing, stark naked and with hideous accoutrements—such a one shall be her lord as I can read from the lines on her palm." (67)

चौ०—सुनि मुनि गिरा सत्य जियँ जानी। दुख दंपतिहि उमा हरषानी॥
नारदहूँ यह भेदु न जाना। दसा एक समुझब बिलगाना॥ १॥
सकल सखीं गिरिजा गिरि मैना। पुलक सरीर भरे जल नैना॥
होइ न मृषा देवरिषि भाषा। उमा सो बचनु हृदयँ धरि राखा॥ २॥
उपजेउ सिव पद कमल सनेहू। मिलन कठिन मन भा संदेहू॥
जानि कुअवसरु प्रीति दुराई। सखी उछँग बैठी पुनि जाई॥ ३॥
झूठि न होइ देवरिषि बानी। सोचहिं दंपति सखीं सयानी॥
उर धरि धीर कहइ गिरिराऊ। कहहु नाथ का करिअ उपाऊ॥ ४॥

Hearing the words of the sage and believing them to be true, Himālaya and his wife became disconsolate; while Umā felt delighted. Even Nārada could not perceive this difference. Even though their outer expression was the same, their feeling was different. Girijā and all her playmates, Himālaya and his wife, Menā, all had their hair standing on their end and their eyes were full of tears. The words of the celestial sage Nārada could not be untrue: Umā cherished them in her heart. Love for the lotus feet of Śiva sprouted in her heart. She, however, felt diffident in her mind: union with Śiva

appeared so difficult to her. Finding the time inopportune for its disclosure, she concealed her emotion and then sat down in the lap of one of her playmates. The prediction of the sage could not be false: the thought made Himavān and his wife as well as the senior playmates anxious. Collecting himself, the lord of mountains said, "Tell me, holy sir, what remedy should now be employed ?"

(1–4)

दो०—कह मुनीस हिमवंत सुनु जो बिधि लिखा लिलार ।
देव दनुज नर नाग मुनि कोउ न मेटनिहार ॥ ६८ ॥

The chief of sages, Nārada, replied: "Hear, O Himavān; whatever has been decreed by Fate no one can undo,—not even gods, demons, human beings, Nāgas or sages.

(68)

चौ०—तदपि एक मैं कहउँ उपाई । होइ करै जौं दैउ सहाई ॥
जस बरु मैं बरनेउँ तुम्ह पाहीं । मिलिहि उमहि तस संसय नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
जे जे बर के दोष बखाने । ते सब सिव पहिं मैं अनुमाने ॥
जौं बिबाहु संकर सन होई । दोषउ गुन सम कह सबु कोई ॥ २ ॥
जौं अहि सेज सयन हरि करहीं । बुध कछु तिन्ह कर दोषु न धरहीं ॥
भानु कृसानु सर्ब रस खाहीं । तिन्ह कहँ मंद कहत कोउ नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
सुभ अरु असुभ सलिल सब बहई । सुरसरि कोउ अपुनीत न कहई ॥
समरथ कहुँ नहिं दोषु गोसाईं । रबि पावक सुरसरि की नाईं ॥ ४ ॥

"Nevertheless I tell you one remedy: this may avail if heaven helps you. Umā will undoubtedly get such a husband as I have described to you. But whatever demerits I have shown in her bridegroom exist in Śiva so far as I can guess. If her marriage takes place with Śankara, everyone will call the demerits as good as virtues. Even though Śrī Hari uses the serpent-god Śeṣa as His couch and sleeps thereon, the wise do not blame Him for the same. Even so the sun and fire absorb moisture in all forms, but no one calls them names. Again, water of every description, pure as well as impure, flows into the Gangā; yet no one calls the heavenly stream impure. Even like the sun, fire and the Gangā, the mighty incur no blame.

(1–4)

दो०—जौं अस हिसिषा करहिं नर जड़ बिबेक अभिमान ।
परहिं कलप भरि नरक महुँ जीव कि ईस समान ॥ ६९ ॥

"If in their pride of wisdom foolish men emulate the great, they are cast into hell for a whole Kalpa or life-time of the universe. Can an embodied soul vie with God ?

(69)

चौ०—सुरसरि जल कृत बारुनि जाना । कबहुँ न संत करहिं तेहि पाना ॥
सुरसरि मिलें सो पावन जैसें । ईस अनीसहि अंतरु तैसें ॥ १ ॥
संभु सहज समरथ भगवाना । एहि बिबाहँ सब बिधि कल्याना ॥
दुराराध्य पै अहहिं महेसू । आसुतोष पुनि किएँ कलेसू ॥ २ ॥

जौं तपु करै कुमारि तुम्हारी । भाविउ मेटि सकहिं त्रिपुरारी ॥
जद्यपि बर अनेक जग माहीं । एहि कहँ सिव तजि दूसर नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
बर दायक प्रनतारति भंजन । कृपासिंधु सेवक मन रंजन ॥
इच्छित फल बिनु सिव अवराधें । लहिअ न कोटि जोग जप साधें ॥ ४ ॥

"Holy men would never drink wine even if they came to know that it had been made of water from the Gangā; but the same wine becomes pure when it is poured into the Gangā. The difference between an individual soul and God should be similarly explained. Śambhu is all-powerful by nature; for He is no other than God Himself. Hence matrimony with Him will prove auspicious in every way. The great Lord Śiva is certainly difficult to propitiate; but He is quickly pleased when penance is undergone. If your daughter practises austerity, the Slayer of the demon Tripura, Śiva, can even erase the lines of Fate. Even though there may be many a suitor in the world, there is no match for her except Śiva. He is the bestower of boons, the dispeller of the agony of the suppliant, an ocean of benevolence and the delight of His devotee. Without propitiating Śiva the object of one's desire cannot be attained through millions of Yogic practices and Japa (repetitions of a mystic formula)."

(1—4)

दो०—अस कहि नारद सुमिरि हरि गिरिजहि दीन्हि असीस ।
होइहि यह कल्यान अब संसय तजहु गिरीस ॥ ७० ॥

So saying and with his thoughts fixed on Śrī Hari, Nārada gave his blessings to Girijā and said, "Shed all fear, O lord of mountains; all will now turn out well."

(70)

चौ०—कहि अस ब्रह्मभवन मुनि गयऊ । आगिल चरित सुनहु जस भयऊ ॥
पतिहि एकांत पाइ कह मैना । नाथ न मैं समुझे मुनि बैना ॥ १ ॥
जौं घरु बरु कुलु होइ अनूपा । करिअ बिबाहु सुता अनुरूपा ॥
न त कन्या बरु रहउ कुआरी । कंत उमा मम प्रानपिआरी ॥ २ ॥
जौं न मिलिहि बरु गिरिजहि जोगू । गिरि जड़ सहज कहिहि सबु लोगू ॥
सोइ बिचारि पति करेहु बिबाहू । जेहिं न बहोरि होइ उर दाहू ॥ ३ ॥
अस कहि परी चरन धरि सीसा । बोले सहित सनेह गिरीसा ॥
बरु पावक प्रगटै ससि माहीं । नारद बचनु अन्यथा नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Having spoken thus, the sage returned to the abode of Brahmā (the Creator)- Now hear the end of the story how it came about. Finding her husband alone, Menā (Himālaya's wife) said to him, "My lord, I could not follow the words of the sage. If the match, his house and his pedigree are without parallel and worthy of our daughter, the marriage may be concluded. If not, the girl had better remain unmarried; for, my lord, Umā is dear to me as my own life. If we fail to secure a match worthy of Girijā, everyone will say Himālaya is dull by nature. Keep this in mind, my lord, while concluding an alliance, so that there may be no cause for repentance." Having spoken these words Menā laid herself prostrate with her head at the feet of her lord. The lord of mountains, Himālaya, replied in endearing terms, "Sooner shall the moon emit flames of fire than the prophecy of Nārada should prove untrue.

(1—4)

दो०—प्रिया सोचु परिहरहु सबु सुमिरहु श्रीभगवान ।
पारबतिहि निरमयउ जेहिं सोइ करिहि कल्यान ॥ ७१ ॥

"Put away all anxiety, my dear, and fix your thoughts on the Lord. He alone who has created Pārvatī will bring her happiness." (71)

चौ०—अब जौं तुम्हहि सुता पर नेहू । तौ अस जाइ सिखावनु देहू ॥
करै सो तपु जेहिं मिलहिं महेसू । आन उपायँ न मिटिहि कलेसू ॥ १ ॥
नारद बचन सगर्भ सहेतू । सुंदर सब गुन निधि बृषकेतू ॥
अस बिचारि तुम्ह तजहु असंका । सबहि भाँति संकरु अकलंका ॥ २ ॥
सुनि पति बचन हरषि मन माहीं । गई तुरत उठि गिरिजा पाहीं ॥
उमहि बिलोकि नयन भरे बारी । सहित सनेह गोद बैठारी ॥ ३ ॥
बारहिं बार लेति उर लाई । गदगद कंठ न कछु कहि जाई ॥
जगत मातु सर्बग्य भवानी । मातु सुखद बोलीं मृदु बानी ॥ ४ ॥

"Now if you cherish any love for your child, then go and admonish her that she should practise austerity which may bring about her union with Śiva: there is no other way of overcoming sorrow. The words of Nārada are pregnant and full of reason. Śiva (who bears a bull for His emblem) is handsome and a mine of all virtues: recognizing this truth do not entertain any misgiving. Śankara is irreproachable in every way." Hearing the above words of her husband Menā felt delighted at heart; she at once rose and went where Girijā was. At the sight of Umā tears rushed to her eyes and she affectionately took the girl in her lap. Again and again she hugged the child; her voice was choked with emotion and she found herself tongue-tied. The Mother of the universe, the all-knowing Bhavānī, then spoke the following soft words, which brought delight to her mother:— (1—4)

दो०—सुनहि मातु मैं दीख अस सपन सुनावउँ तोहि ।
सुंदर गौर सुबिप्रबर अस उपदेसेउ मोहि ॥ ७२ ॥

"Listen, mother; I relate to you a vision which I saw. A handsome and fair-complexioned noble Brahman gave me the following exhortation. (72)

चौ०—करहि जाइ तपु सैलकुमारी । नारद कहा सो सत्य बिचारी ॥
मातु पितहि पुनि यह मत भावा । तपु सुखप्रद दुख दोष नसावा ॥ १ ॥
तपबल रचइ प्रपंचु बिधाता । तपबल बिष्नु सकल जग त्राता ॥
तपबल संभु करहिं संघारा । तपबल सेषु धरइ महि भारा ॥ २ ॥
तप अधार सब सृष्टि भवानी । करहि जाइ तपु अस जियँ जानी ॥
सुनत बचन बिसमित महतारी । सपन सुनायउ गिरिहि हँकारी ॥ ३ ॥
मातु पितहि बहुबिधि समुझाई । चलीं उमा तप हित हरषाई ॥
प्रिय परिवार पिता अरु माता । भए बिकल मुख आव न बाता ॥ ४ ॥

"Recognizing the truth of Nārada's words go and practise austerity, O mountain-maid; the idea has commended itself to your father and mother as well. Austerity is conducive to joy and puts an end to sorrow and evils. By virtue of penance the Creator creates the universe. By virtue of penance Viṣṇu protects the whole world. By virtue of penance Śambhu brings about dissolution. By virtue of penance, again, Śeṣa (the serpent-god) bears the burden of the earth on his head. In fact, the entire creation rests on penance, Bhavānī. Bearing this in mind, go and practise austerity." Hearing these words the mother was filled with wonder. She sent for Himālaya and communicated the vision to him. Consoling her parents in many ways Umā set out for penance in a joyous mood. Her loving household and parents felt miserable and none could speak a word. (1—4)

दो०—बेदसिरा मुनि आइ तब सबहि कहा समुझाइ ।
पारबती महिमा सुनत रहे प्रबोधहि पाइ ॥ ७३ ॥

The sage Vedaśirā then came and consoled them all. They were comforted when they heard of the glory of Pārvatī. (73)

चौ०—उर धरि उमा प्रानपति चरना । जाइ बिपिन लागीं तपु करना ॥
अति सुकुमार न तनु तप जोगू । पति पद सुमिरि तजेउ सबु भोगू ॥ १ ॥
नित नव चरन उपज अनुरागा । बिसरी देह तपहिं मनु लागा ॥
संबत सहस मूल फल खाए । सागु खाइ सत बरष गवाँए ॥ २ ॥
कछु दिन भोजनु बारि बतासा । किए कठिन कछु दिन उपबासा ॥
बेल पाती महि परइ सुखाई । तीनि सहस संबत सोइ खाई ॥ ३ ॥
पुनि परिहरे सुखानेउ परना । उमहि नामु तब भयउ अपरना ॥
देखि उमहि तप खीन सरीरा । ब्रह्मगिरा भै गगन गभीरा ॥ ४ ॥

Cherishing in her heart the feet of her dear lord, Umā went to the forest and began her penance Her delicate frame was little fit for austerities; yet she renounced all luxuries fixing her mind on the feet of her lord. Her devotion to the feet of her lord presented a new phase every day; and she got so absorbed in penance that she lost all consciousness of her body. For a thousand years she lived on roots and fruits alone; while for another hundred years she subsisted on vegetables. For some days her only sustenance was water and air; while for a few days she observed a rigorous fast. For three thousand years she maintained herself on the withered leaves of the *Bel** tree that dropped on the ground. Finally she gave up even dry leaves; Umā then came to be known by the name of Aparnā (living without leaves). Seeing her body emaciated through self-mortification the deep voice of Brahmā (the Creator) resounded through the heavens :— (1—4)

दो०—भयउ मनोरथ सुफल तव सुनु गिरिराजकुमारि ।
परिहरु दुसह कलेस सब अब मिलिहहिं त्रिपुरारि ॥ ७४ ॥

"Listen, O daughter of the mountain-king; your desire is accomplished. Cease all your rigorous penance; the Slayer of Tripura will soon be yours. (74)

* The *Bel* tree (*Aegle Marmelos*) is specially sacred to Śiva.

चौ०—अस तपु काहुँ न कीन्ह भवानी। भए अनेक धीर मुनि ग्यानी॥
अब उर धरहु ब्रह्म बर बानी। सत्य सदा संतत सुचि जानी॥ १॥
आवै पिता बोलावन जबहीं। हठ परिहरि घर जाएहु तबहीं॥
मिलहिं तुम्हहि जब सप्त रिषीसा। जानेहु तब प्रमान बागीसा॥ २॥
सुनत गिरा बिधि गगन बखानी। पुलक गात गिरिजा हरषानी॥
उमा चरित सुंदर मैं गावा। सुनहु संभु कर चरित सुहावा॥ ३॥
जब तें सतीं जाइ तनु त्यागा। तब तें सिव मन भयउ बिरागा॥
जपहिं सदा रघुनायक नामा। जहँ तहँ सुनहिं राम गुन ग्रामा॥ ४॥

"There have been many self-possessed and illumined sages; but not one of them, Bhavānī, performed such penance as this. Now cherish in your heart this supreme utterance from heaven, knowing it to be invariably true and ever sacred. When your father comes to call you, give up all resistance and return home at once. Again, when the seven sages meet you, be assured of the veracity of this oracle." Girijā (the daughter of Himavān) rejoiced to hear this utterance of Brahmā echoed by heaven, and a thrill ran through her limbs. [Yājñavalkya says to Bharadwāja,] I have thus sung the beautiful story of Umā; now hear the charming account of Śambhu. Ever since Satī went and quitted her body, Śiva's mind recoiled from everything. He ever repeated the name of the Lord of Raghus and heard the recitation of Śrī Rāma's glories here and there. (1—4)

दो०—चिदानंद सुखधाम सिव बिगत मोह मद काम।
बिचरहिं महि धरि हृदयँ हरि सकल लोक अभिराम॥ ७५॥

The embodiment of intelligence and bliss, the abode of happiness, Śiva, who is ever free from error, arrogance and desire, roamed about on earth with His heart fixed on Śrī Hari, the delight of the whole world. (75)

चौ०—कतहुँ मुनिन्ह उपदेसहिं ग्याना। कतहुँ राम गुन करहिं बखाना॥
जदपि अकाम तदपि भगवाना। भगत बिरह दुख दुखित सुजाना॥ १॥
एहि बिधि गयउ कालु बहु बीती। नित नै होइ राम पद प्रीती॥
नेमु प्रेमु संकर कर देखा। अबिचल हृदयँ भगति कै रेखा॥ २॥
प्रगटे रामु कृतग्य कृपाला। रूप सील निधि तेज बिसाला॥
बहु प्रकार संकरहि सराहा। तुम्ह बिनु अस ब्रतु को निरबाहा॥ ३॥
बहु बिधि राम सिवहि समुझावा। पारबती कर जन्मु सुनावा॥
अति पुनीत गिरिजा कै करनी। बिस्तर सहित कृपानिधि बरनी॥ ४॥

Here He instructed the sages in wisdom and there He extolled the virtues of Śrī Rāma. Though passionless and all-wise, the Lord was smitten with the pangs of separation from His devotee (Satī). In this way a considerable time elapsed. Devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma was ever budding in His heart. When Śrī Rāma saw the self-discipline and affection of Śaṅkara and the indelible stamp of devotion on His heart, the merciful Lord, who fully recognizes services rendered to Him, and is a mine of beauty and amiability

and an embodiment of great splendour, appeared before Śankara and extolled Him in ways more than one. "Who else than You can accomplish such a vow ?" He said. Śrī Rāma admonished Him in many ways and told Him of the birth of Pārvatī. The Lord in His infinite compassion narrated at full length the most pious doings of Girijā. (1—4)

दो०—अब बिनती मम सुनहु सिव जौं मोपर निज नेहु ।
जाइ बिबाहहु सैलजहि यह मोहि मागें देहु ॥ ७६ ॥

"Now, Śiva, if You have any affection for Me, listen to My appeal. Go and marry Śailajā (the daughter of Himāchala): grant this boon to Me." (76)

चौ०—कह सिव जदपि उचित अस नाहीं । नाथ बचन पुनि मेटि न जाहीं ॥
सिर धरि आयसु करिअ तुम्हारा । परम धरमु यह नाथ हमारा ॥ १ ॥
मातु पिता गुर प्रभु कै बानी । बिनहिं बिचार करिअ सुभ जानी ॥
तुम्ह सब भाँति परम हितकारी । अग्या सिर पर नाथ तुम्हारी ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु तोषेउ सुनि संकर बचना । भक्ति बिबेक धर्म जुत रचना ॥
कह प्रभु हर तुम्हार पन रहेऊ । अब उर राखेहु जो हम कहेऊ ॥ ३ ॥
अंतरधान भए अस भाषी । संकर सोइ मूरति उर राखी ॥
तबहिं सप्तरिषि सिव पहिं आए । बोले प्रभु अति बचन सुहाए ॥ ४ ॥

Śiva replied, "Although this is hardly justifiable, the words of a master cannot be set aside at the same time. My lord, your command must be respectfully carried out: this is my paramount duty. The words of one's parents, teacher and master must be unquestionably obeyed as conducive to bliss. You are my supreme benefactor in every way; therefore, my lord, I bow to Your commands." The Lord was pleased to hear the well-chosen words of Śankara, which were inspired with devotion, wisdom and piety. The Lord said, "Your vow has been kept; now bear in mind what I have told You." Saying so He went out of sight. Śankara cherished the impression of the vision in His heart. That very moment the seven sages called on Śiva. The Lord spoke to them in most charming accents:— (1—4)

दो०—पारबती पहिं जाइ तुम्ह प्रेम परिच्छा लेहु ।
गिरिहि प्रेरि पठएहु भवन दूरि करेहु संदेहु ॥ ७७ ॥

"Going to Pārvatī, you put her love to the test. Then directing her father, Himālaya, to her, send her back to her home and dispel her doubts." (77)

चौ०—रिषिन्ह गौरि देखी तहँ कैसी । मूरतिमंत तपस्या जैसी ॥
बोले मुनि सुनु सैलकुमारी । करहु कवन कारन तपु भारी ॥ १ ॥
केहि अवराधहु का तुम्ह चहहू । हम सन सत्य मरमु किन कहहू ॥
कहत बचन मनु अति सकुचाई । हँसिहहु सुनि हमारि जड़ताई ॥ २ ॥
मनु हठ परा न सुनइ सिखावा । चहत बारि पर भीति उठावा ॥
नारद कहा सत्य सोइ जाना । बिनु पंखन्ह हम चहहिं उड़ाना ॥ ३ ॥
देखहु मुनि अबिबेकु हमारा । चाहिअ सदा सिवहि भरतारा ॥ ४ ॥

There the seers saw Gaurī (a name of Pārvatī; *lit.*, fair-complexioned) as if she were penance itself personified. The sages said, "Hear, O daughter of Himāchala: why are you practising such rigorous penance? Whom do you worship and what do you seek? Why not confide to us the real secret?" "I feel very shy in making my submission. You will be amused to hear of my folly. Yet my mind has taken a rigid attitude and heeds no advice; it would raise a wall on water. Relying on the truth of Nārada's prophecy, I long to fly even without wings. Look at my madness: I always covet Śiva as my husband."

(1—4)

दो०—सुनत बचन बिहसे रिषय गिरिसंभव तव देह ।
नारद कर उपदेसु सुनि कहहु बसेउ किसु गेह ॥ ७८ ॥

Hearing the above reply the sages laughed and said, "After all your body owes its existence to a mountain (Himālaya); tell us who has ever listened to Nārada's advice and lived in his home. (78)

चौ०—दच्छसुतन्ह उपदेसेन्हि जाई । तिन्ह फिरि भवनु न देखा आई ॥
चित्रकेतु कर घरु उन घाला । कनककसिपु कर पुनि अस हाला ॥ १ ॥
नारद सिख जे सुनहिं नर नारी । अवसि होहिं तजि भवनु भिखारी ॥
मन कपटी तन सज्जन चीन्हा । आपु सरिस सबही चह कीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
तेहि कें बचन मानि बिस्वासा । तुम्ह चाहहु पति सहज उदासा ॥
निर्गुन निलज कुबेष कपाली । अकुल अगेह दिगंबर ब्याली ॥ ३ ॥
कहहु कवन सुखु अस बरु पाएँ । भल भूलिहु ठग के बौराएँ ॥
पंच कहें सिवँ सती बिबाही । पुनि अवडेरि मराएन्हि ताही ॥ ४ ॥

"He called on and admonished the sons of Dakṣa and they never saw their home again. It was he who ruined the home of Chitraketu; and again Hiraṇyakaśipu (the father of Prahlāda) met a similar fate. Men and women who listen to Nārada's advice are sure to leave their home and become mendicants. Guileful at heart, he bears on his person the marks of a pious man; he would make everyone just like himself. Relying on his words you crave for a husband who is apathetic by nature, devoid of attributes, shameless, homeless and naked, who has an inauspicious look about him, wears a string of skulls around his neck, is without a family and has serpents for his ornaments. Tell us, what happiness do you expect by obtaining such a husband? You have fallen an easy prey to the machinations of that imposter! Śiva married Satī at the intercession of some friends; but later on he abandoned her and left her to die. (1—4)

दो०—अब सुख सोवत सोचु नहिं भीख मागि भव खाहिं ।
सहज एकाकिन्ह के भवन कबहुँ कि नारि खटाहिं ॥ ७९ ॥

"Śiva is care-free now; he lives on alms and enjoys a sound sleep. Can women ever stay in the house of habitual recluses? (79)

चौ०—अजहूँ मानहु कहा हमारा । हम तुम्ह कहुँ बरु नीक बिचारा ॥
अति सुंदर सुचि सुखद सुसीला । गावहिं बेद जासु जस लीला ॥ १ ॥
दूषन रहित सकल गुन रासी । श्रीपति पुर बैकुंठ निवासी ॥
अस बरु तुम्हहि मिलाउब आनी । सुनत बिहसि कह बचन भवानी ॥ २ ॥
सत्य कहेहु गिरिभव तनु एहा । हठ न छूट छूटै बरु देहा ॥
कनकउ पुनि पषान तें होई । जारेहुँ सहजु न परिहर सोई ॥ ३ ॥
नारद बचन न मैं परिहरऊँ । बसउ भवनु उजरउ नहिं डरऊँ ॥
गुर कें बचन प्रतीति न जेही । सपनेहुँ सुगम न सुख सिधि तेही ॥ ४ ॥

"Even now accept our advice; we have thought of an excellent match for you—exceptionally good-looking, pious, agreeable and amiable, whose glory and exploits are sung by the Vedas. He is free from blemish, is a mine of all virtues and the lord of Lakṣmī (the goddess of prosperity) and has His abode in Vaikunṭha. Such a suitor we shall unite with you." Hearing this, Bhavānī laughed and said, "You have rightly observed that this body of mine is begotten of a rock: I would sooner die than give up my tenacity. Gold is another product of rock which does not abandon its character even on being consigned to fire. I may not ignore Nārada's advice; whether my house is full cr desolate, I fear not. He who has no faith in the words of his preceptor cannot easily attain either happiness or success even in a dream.

(1—4)

दो०—महादेव अवगुन भवन बिष्नु सकल गुन धाम ।
जेहि कर मनु रम जाहि सन तेहि तेही सन काम ॥ ८० ॥

"The great god Śiva may be full of faults and Viṣṇu may be a repository of all virtues One is, however, concerned with him alone who gladdens one's heart. (80)

चौ०—जौं तुम्ह मिलतेहु प्रथम मुनीसा । सुनतिउँ सिख तुम्हारि धरि सीसा ॥
अब मैं जन्मु संभु हित हारा । को गुन दूषन करै बिचारा ॥ १ ॥
जौं तुम्हरे हठ हृदयँ बिसेषी । रहि न जाइ बिनु किएँ बरेषी ॥
तौ कौतुकिअन्ह आलसु नाहीं । बर कन्या अनेक जग माहीं ॥ २ ॥
जन्म कोटि लगि रगर हमारी । बरउँ संभु न त रहउँ कुआरी ॥
तजउँ न नारद कर उपदेसू । आपु कहहिं सत बार महेसू ॥ ३ ॥
मैं पा परउँ कहइ जगदंबा । तुम्ह गृह गवनहु भयउ बिलंबा ॥
देखि प्रेमु बोले मुनि ग्यानी । जय जय जगदंबिके भवानी ॥ ४ ॥

"Had you met me earlier, O great sages! I would have listened to your advice with reverence. But now that I have staked my life for Śambhu, who will weigh His merits and demerits ? If you are specially bent upon uniting a pair and cannot help negotiating a match, there is no dearth of suitors and maidens; and those who take delight in such games know no weariness. As for myself I must wed Śambhu or remain a virgin, no matter if I have to continue

the struggle for ten million lives. I will not disregard Nārada's admonition even if Śambhu Himself tells me a hundred times to do so." "I fall at your feet," continued Pārvatī, the Mother of the universe, "please return to your home. It is already late." Seeing Pārvatī's devotion the enlightened sages exclaimed, "Glory, all glory to You, O Bhavānī, Mother of the universe! (1—4)

दो०—तुम्ह माया भगवान सिव सकल जगत पितु मातु ।
नाइ चरन सिर मुनि चले पुनि पुनि हरषत गातु ॥ ८१ ॥

"You are Māyā, while Śiva is God Himself; You are the parents of the whole universe." Bowing their head at the feet of Pārvatī, they departed. A thrill ran through their frame again and again. (81)

चौ०—जाइ मुनिन्ह हिमवंतु पठाए । करि बिनती गिरजहिं गृह ल्याए ॥
बहुरि सप्तरिषि सिव पहिं जाई । कथा उमा कै सकल सुनाई ॥ १ ॥
भए मगन सिव सुनत सनेहा । हरषि सप्तरिषि गवने गेहा ॥
मनु थिर करि तब संभु सुजाना । लगे करन रघुनायक ध्याना ॥ २ ॥
तारकु असुर भयउ तेहि काला । भुज प्रताप बल तेज बिसाला ॥
तेहिं सब लोक लोकपति जीते । भए देव सुख संपति रीते ॥ ३ ॥
अजर अमर सो जीति न जाई । हारे सुर करि बिबिध लराई ॥
तब बिरंचि सन जाइ पुकारे । देखे बिधि सब देव दुखारे ॥ ४ ॥

The sages went and despatched Himavān to Girijā and he with many entreaties brought her home. The seven seers then called on Śiva and told Him the whole history of Umā. Śiva was enraptured to hear of her love; and the Saptarṣis gladly went home. The all-wise Śambhu then concentrated His mind and began to meditate on the Lord of Raghus. A demon, Tāraka by name, flourished in those days; his strength of arm, glory and majesty were great indeed. He conquered all the spheres as well as the guardians of those spheres; all the gods were robbed of their happiness and prosperity. Knowing neither age nor death, he was invincible. The gods fought many a battle with him and lost them. They then went to Virañchi (Brahmā) and told him their grievances. The Creator found all the gods miserable. (1—4)

दो०—सब सन कहा बुझाइ बिधि दनुज निधन तब होइ ।
संभु सुक्र संभूत सुत एहि जीतइ रन सोइ ॥ ८२ ॥

Brahmā reassured them all saying, "The demon shall die only when there is a son sprung from the loins of Śambhu; for he alone can subdue the demon in battle. (82)

चौ०—मोर कहा सुनि करहु उपाई । होइहि ईस्वर करिहि सहाई ॥
सतीं जो तजी दच्छ मख देहा । जनमी जाइ हिमाचल गेहा ॥ १ ॥
तेहिं तपु कीन्ह संभु पति लागी । सिव समाधि बैठे सबु त्यागी ॥
जदपि अहइ असमंजस भारी । तदपि बात एक सुनहु हमारी ॥ २ ॥
पठवहु कामु जाइ सिव पाहीं । करै छोभु संकर मन माहीं ॥
तब हम जाइ सिवहि सिर नाई । करवाउब बिबाहु बरिआई ॥ ३ ॥

एहि बिधि भलेहिं देव हित होई । मत अति नीक कहइ सबु कोई ॥
अस्तुति सुरन्ह कीन्हि अति हेतू । प्रगटेउ बिषमबान झषकेतू ॥ ४ ॥

"Hearing what I say, act accordingly; God will help you and the plan will succeed. Satī, who left her body at the sacrifice performed by Dakṣa, has been born again in the house of Himāchala. She has undergone penance for winning the hand of Śambhu; while Śiva has renounced everything and sits absorbed in contemplation. Although it is most unseemly, yet hear one proposal of mine. Approaching Cupid (the god of love), send him to Śiva; and let him disturb the serenity of Śankara's mind. Then we shall go and bow our head at Śiva's feet and prevail on Him to marry even against His will. In this way alone may the interests of the gods be served." "The idea is excellent," everyone said. The gods then prayed with great devotion and the god of love, armed with five* arrows and having a fish emblazoned on his standard, appeared on the scene. (1—4)

दो०—सुरन्ह कही निज बिपति सब सुनि मन कीन्ह बिचार ।
संभु बिरोध न कुसल मोहि बिहसि कहेउ अस मार ॥ ८३ ॥

The gods told him all their distress; hearing their tale, the god of love pondered and spoke thus with a smile, "I expect no good results for myself from hostility to Śambhu. (83)

चौ०—तदपि करब मैं काजु तुम्हारा । श्रुति कह परम धरम उपकारा ॥
पर हित लागि तजइ जो देही । संतत संत प्रसंसहिं तेही ॥ १ ॥
अस कहि चलेउ सबहि सिरु नाई । सुमन धनुष कर सहित सहाई ॥
चलत मार अस हृदयँ बिचारा । सिव बिरोध ध्रुव मरनु हमारा ॥ २ ॥
तब आपन प्रभाउ बिस्तारा । निज बस कीन्ह सकल संसारा ॥
कोपेउ जबहिं बारिचरकेतू । छन महुँ मिटे सकल श्रुति सेतू ॥ ३ ॥
ब्रह्मचर्ज ब्रत संजम नाना । धीरज धरम ग्यान बिग्याना ॥
सदाचार जप जोग बिरागा । सभय बिबेक कटकु सबु भागा ॥ ४ ॥

"However, I shall do your work; for the Vedas say benevolence is the highest virtue. The saints ever praise him who lays down his life in the service of others." So saying, the god of love bowed his head to all and departed with his associates, the bow of flowers in hand. While leaving, Love thought within himself that hostility to Śiva would mean sure death to him. He then exhibited his power and brought the whole world under his sway. When the god of love (who bears a fish for his emblem) betrayed his anger, all the barriers imposed by the Vedas were swept away in a moment. The whole army of Viveka (discriminating knowledge),—continence, religious vows, self-restraint of many kinds, fortitude, piety, spiritual

* The white lotus, the Aśoka flower, the mango blossom, the jasmine and the blue lotus—these are the five kinds of arrows with which the god of love is believed to be armed.

wisdom and the knowledge of qualified divinity both with form and without form, morality, muttering of prayers, Yoga (contemplative union with God), dispassion and so on, fled in panic. (1—4)

छं०—भागेउ बिबेकु सहाय सहित सो सुभट संजुग महि मुरे ।
सदग्रंथ पर्बत कंदरन्हि महुँ जाइ तेहि अवसर दुरे ॥
होनिहार का करतार को रखवार जग खरभरु परा ।
दुइ माथ केहि रतिनाथ जेहि कहुँ कोपि कर धनु सरु धरा ॥

Viveka took to flight with his associates; his great warriors turned their back on the field of battle. They all went and hid themselves in mountain-caves in the form of sacred books at that time. There was commotion in the world and everybody said, "My goodness, what is going to happen? What power will save us? Who is that superhuman being with two heads, to conquer whom the lord of Rati*, Love, has lifted his bow and arrows in rage?

दो०—जे सजीव जग अचर चर नारि पुरुष अस नाम ।
ते निज निज मरजाद तजि भए सकल बस काम ॥ ८४ ॥

Whatever creatures existed in the world, whether animate or inanimate and bearing masculine or feminine appellations, transgressed their natural bounds and were completely possessed by lust. (84)

चौ०—सब के हृदयँ मदन अभिलाषा । लता निहारि नवहिं तरु साखा ॥
नदीं उमगि अंबुधि कहुँ धाईं । संगम करहिं तलाव तलाईं ॥ १ ॥
जहँ असि दसा जड़न्ह कै बरनी । को कहि सकइ सचेतन करनी ॥
पसु पच्छी नभ जल थलचारी । भए कामबस समय बिसारी ॥ २ ॥
मदन अंध ब्याकुल सब लोका । निसि दिनु नहिं अवलोकहिं कोका ॥
देव दनुज नर किंनर ब्याला । प्रेत पिसाच भूत बेताला ॥ ३ ॥
इन्ह कै दसा न कहेउँ बखानी । सदा काम के चेरे जानी ॥
सिद्ध बिरक्त महामुनि जोगी । तेपि कामबस भए बियोगी ॥ ४ ॥

The minds of all were seized with lust; the boughs of trees bent low at the sight of creepers. Rivers in spate rushed to meet the ocean; lakes and ponds united in love with one another. Where such was reported to be the case with the inanimate creation, who can relate the doings of sentient beings? Beasts that walk on land and birds traversing the air, and water lost all sense of time and became victims of lust. The whole world was blinded with passion and agitated. The Chakravāka birds, (ruddy geese)† regarded neither day nor night. Gods, demons, human beings, Kinnaras (a class of demigods), serpents, evil spirits, fiends, ghosts and vampires—I have refrained from dwelling on the condition of these, knowing them to be

* The name of Love's wife.

† The red gander and goose are said to unite only during the daytime. They cannot meet at night even if there is no physical barrier between them. During the brief span of time referred to above they ignored this natural bar and met even during the night.

eternal slaves of passion. Even Siddhas (spiritual adepts), great sages who had no attraction for the world and Yogis (mystics) gave up their Yoga (contemplative union with God) under the influence of lust. (1—4)

छं०—भए कामबस जोगीस तापस पावँरन्हि की को कहै ।
देखहिं चराचर नारिमय जे ब्रह्ममय देखत रहे ॥
अबला बिलोकहिं पुरुषमय जगु पुरुष सब अबलामयं ।
दुइ दंड भरि ब्रह्मांड भीतर कामकृत कौतुक अयं ॥

Even great Yogis and ascetics were completely possessed by lust, to say nothing of low-minded people ? Those who till lately looked upon the animate and inanimate creation as full of Brahma (God) now saw it as full of the fair sex. Women perceived the whole world as full of men; while the latter beheld it as full of women. For nearly an hour this wonderful game of Love lasted in the universe.

सो०—धरी न काहूँ धीर सब के मन मनसिज हरे ।
जे राखे रघुबीर ते उबरे तेहि काल महुँ ॥ ८५ ॥

Nobody could remain self-possessed; the hearts of all were stolen by the god of love. They alone could hold their own against him, to whom the Hero of Raghu's race extended His protection. (85)

चौ०—उभय घरी अस कौतुक भयऊ । जौ लगि कामु संभु पहिं गयऊ ॥
सिवहि बिलोकि ससंकेउ मारू । भयउ जथाथिति सबु संसारू ॥ १ ॥
भए तुरत सब जीव सुखारे । जिमि मद उतरि गएँ मतवारे ॥
रुद्रहि देखि मदन भय माना । दुराधरष दुर्गम भगवाना ॥ २ ॥
फिरत लाज कछु करि नहिं जाई । मरनु ठानि मन रचेसि उपाई ॥
प्रगटेसि तुरत रुचिर रितुराजा । कुसुमित नव तरु राजि बिराजा ॥ ३ ॥
बन उपबन बापिका तड़ागा । परम सुभग सब दिसा बिभागा ॥
जहँ तहँ जनु उमगत अनुरागा । देखि मुएहुँ मन मनसिज जागा ॥ ४ ॥

The wonder lasted for an hour or so till the god of love reached Śambhu. Cupid trembled at the sight of Śiva; the whole world returned to itself. All living beings regained their peace of mind at once, even as the intoxicated feel relieved when their spell of drunkenness is over. The god of love was struck with terror at the sight of Bhagavān Rudra (Śiva), who is so difficult to conquer and so hard to comprehend. He felt shy in retreating and was incapable of doing anything; ultimately he resolved upon death and devised a plan. He forthwith manifested the lovely spring, the king of all seasons; rows of young trees laden with flowers appeared so charming. Woods and groves, wells and ponds and all the quarters of heaven assumed a most delightful aspect Everywhere nature overflowed with love as it were; the sight aroused passion even in dead souls. (1—4)

छं०—जागइ मनोभव मुएहुँ मन बन सुभगता न परै कही ।
सीतल सुगंध सुमंद मारुत मदन अनल सखा सही ॥
बिकसे सरन्हि बहु कंज गुंजत पुंज मंजुल मधुकरा ।
कलहंस पिक सुक सरस रव करि गान नाचहिं अपछरा ॥

Passion was aroused even in dead souls and the beauty of the forest beggared description. A cool, gentle and fragrant breeze fanned the fire of passion as a faithful companion. Rows of lotuses blossomed in lakes and swarms of charming bees hummed on them. Swans, cuckoos and parrots uttered their sweet notes; while celestial damsels sang and danced.

दो०—सकल कला करि कोटि बिधि हारेउ सेन समेत ।
चली न अचल समाधि सिव कोपेउ हृदयनिकेत ॥ ८६ ॥

The god of love with his army of followers exhausted all his numberless stratagems; Śiva's unbroken trance, however, could not be disturbed. This made Cupid angry. (86)

चौ०—देखि रसाल बिटप बर साखा । तेहि पर चढ़ेउ मदनु मन माखा ॥
सुमन चाप निज सर संधाने । अति रिस ताकि श्रवन लगि ताने ॥ १ ॥
छाड़े बिषम बिसिख उर लागे । छूटि समाधि संभु तब जागे ॥
भयउ ईस मन छोभु बिसेषी । नयन उघारि सकल दिसि देखी ॥ २ ॥
सौरभ पल्लव मदनु बिलोका । भयउ कोपु कंपेउ त्रैलोका ॥
तब सिवँ तीसर नयन उघारा । चितवत कामु भयउ जरि छारा ॥ ३ ॥
हाहाकार भयउ जग भारी । डरपे सुर भए असुर सुखारी ॥
समुझि कामसुखु सोचहिं भोगी । भए अकंटक साधक जोगी ॥ ४ ॥

Seeing a beautiful bough of a mango tree, the god of love climbed up to it in a mood of frustration. He joined his five arrows to his bow of flowers, and casting an angry look drew the string home to his very ears. He discharged the five sharp arrows, which smote the breast of Śiva. The trance was now broken and Śambhu awoke. The Lord's mind was much agitated. Opening His eyes He looked all round. When He saw Cupid hiding behind mango leaves, He flew into a rage, which made all the three spheres tremble. Śiva then uncovered His third eye; the moment He looked at the god of love the latter was reduced to ashes. A loud wail went up through the universe. The gods were alarmed, while the demons were gratified. The thought of (loss of) sense-delights made the voluptuary sad; while the striving Yogis were relieved of a thorn as it were. (1—4)

छं०—जोगी अकंटक भए पति गति सुनत रति मुरुछित भई ।
रोदति बदति बहु भाँति करुना करति संकर पहिं गई ॥
अति प्रेम करि बिनती बिबिध बिधि जोरि कर सन्मुख रही ।
प्रभु आसुतोष कृपाल सिव अबला निरखि बोले सही ॥

The Yogis were freed from torment; while Rati (wife of the god of love) fainted as soon as she heard of the fate of her lord. Weeping and wailing and mourning in various ways she approached Śankara; and making loving entreaties in divergent forms she stood before the Lord with clasped hands. Seeing the helpless woman, the benevolent Lord Śiva, who is so easy to placate, prophesied as follows:—

दो०—अब तें रति तव नाथ कर होइहि नामु अनंगु ।
बिनु बपु ब्यापिहि सबहि पुनि सुनु निज मिलन प्रसंगु ॥ ८७ ॥

"Henceforth, O Rati, your husband shall be called by the name of Ananga (bodiless); he shall dominate all even without a body. Now hear how you will meet him again. (87)

चौ०—जब जदुबंस कृस्न अवतारा । होइहि हरन महा महिभारा ॥
कृस्न तनय होइहि पति तोरा । बचनु अन्यथा होइ न मोरा ॥ १ ॥
रति गवनी सुनि संकर बानी । कथा अपर अब कहउँ बखानी ॥
देवन्ह समाचार सब पाए । ब्रह्मादिक बैकुंठ सिधाए ॥ २ ॥
सब सुर बिष्नु बिरंचि समेता । गए जहाँ सिव कृपानिकेता ॥
पृथक पृथक तिन्ह कीन्हि प्रसंसा । भए प्रसन्न चंद्र अवतंसा ॥ ३ ॥
बोले कृपासिंधु बृषकेतू । कहहु अमर आए केहि हेतू ॥
कह बिधि तुम्ह प्रभु अंतरजामी । तदपि भगति बस बिनवउँ स्वामी ॥ ४ ॥

"When Śrī Kṛṣṇa will descend in the line of Yadu to relieve the earth of its heavy burden, your lord will be born again as His son (Pradyumna); this prediction of Mine can never be untrue." Hearing the words of Śankara, Rati went away. I now proceed to relate the subsequent part of the story. When Brahmā (the Creator) and the other gods received all the tidings, they repaired to Vaikuntha (the abode of God Viṣṇu). Thence all the gods, including Visnu and Virañchi (Brahmā), went where the all-merciful Śiva was. They severally extolled and won the pleasure of the Lord whose crest is adorned by the crescent. Śiva, who is an ocean of compassion and has a bull emblazoned on His standard, said, "Tell me, immortals, what has brought you here ?" To this Brahmā replied, "Lord, You are the inner controller of all; even then, my master, my devotion to You urges me to make the following submission:— (1–4)

दो०—सकल सुरन्ह के हृदयँ अस संकर परम उछाहु ।
निज नयनन्हि देखा चहहिं नाथ तुम्हार बिबाहु ॥ ८८ ॥

"The heart of all the immortals is seized with a dominating impulse. They long to witness Your wedding with their own eyes, my lord. (88)

चौ०—यह उत्सव देखिअ भरि लोचन । सोइ कछु करहु मदन मद मोचन ॥
कामु जारि रति कहुँ बरु दीन्हा । कृपासिंधु यह अति भल कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
सासति करि पुनि करहिं पसाऊ । नाथ प्रभुन्ह कर सहज सुभाऊ ॥
पारबतीं तपु कीन्ह अपारा । करहु तासु अब अंगीकारा ॥ २ ॥

सुनि बिधि बिनय समुझि प्रभु बानी । ऐसेइ होउ कहा सुखु मानी ॥
तब देवन्ह दुंदुभीं बजाईं । बरषि सुमन जय जय सुर साईं ॥ ३ ॥
अवसरु जानि सप्तरिषि आए । तुरतहिं बिधि गिरिभवन पठाए ॥
प्रथम गए जहँ रहीं भवानी । बोले मधुर बचन छल सानी ॥ ४ ॥

"O humbler of the pride of Love! Devise some means whereby we may be enabled to feast our eyes on this glad event. Having burnt the god of love You have done well in granting a boon to Rati, O ocean of compassion. Having meted out punishment, good masters shower their grace as a matter of course: such is their natural habit. Pārvatī has practised penance the magnitude of which cannot be estimated; kindly accept her now." Hearing the entreaty of Brahmā and remembering the words of the Lord (Śrī Rāma), Śiva gladly said, "Amen!" The gods thereupon sounded their kettle-drums; and raining down flowers they exclaimed, "Victory, victory to the Lord of celestials!" Considering it to be an opportune moment, the seven seers arrived on the scene. Brahmā immediately sent them to the abode of Himavān. They approached Bhavānī in the first instance and addressed the following sweet yet deceptive words to her:— (1—4)

दो॰—कहा हमार न सुनेहु तब नारद कें उपदेस ।
अब भा झूठ तुम्हार पन जारेउ कामु महेस ॥ ८९ ॥

"Relying on the advice of Nārada you would not heed our remonstrances then. Your vow has failed now; for the great Lord Śiva has burnt the god of love!" (89)

[PAUSE 3 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ॰—सुनि बोलीं मुसुकाइ भवानी । उचित कहेहु मुनिबर बिग्यानी ॥
तुम्हरें जान कामु अब जारा । अब लगि संभु रहे सबिकारा ॥ १ ॥
हमरें जान सदा सिव जोगी । अज अनवद्य अकाम अभोगी ॥
जौं मैं सिव सेये अस जानी । प्रीति समेत कर्म मन बानी ॥ २ ॥
तौ हमार पन सुनहु मुनीसा । करिहहिं सत्य कृपानिधि ईसा ॥
तुम्ह जो कहा हर जारेउ मारा । सोइ अति बड़ अबिबेकु तुम्हारा ॥ ३ ॥
तात अनल कर सहज सुभाऊ । हिम तेहि निकट जाइ नहिं काऊ ॥
गएँ समीप सो अवसि नसाई । असि मन्मथ महेस की नाई ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing this, Bhavānī smiled and said, "O great and illumined sages, you have spoken aright. According to your belief it is only now that Śambhu has burnt the god of love and that till now He was smitten with love. To my mind, however, Śiva is eternally in rapport with the Infinite, unbegotten, irreproachable, passionless and without enjoyment. Knowing Him as such, if I have served Him lovingly in thought, word and deed, then hear, O great sages: the gracious Lord will accomplish my vow. Your statement that Hara has burnt the god of love betrays woeful lack of thought in you. Fire, my friends, possesses this inherent property that frost can never approach it: in case it does it must inevitably perish. Similar is the case with the god of love and the great Lord Śiva. (1—4)

दो०—हियँ हरषे मुनि बचन सुनि देखि प्रीति बिस्वास ।
चले भवानिहि नाइ सिर गए हिमाचल पास ॥ ९० ॥

Hearing the words of Bhavānī and perceiving her devotion and faith, the sages were gladdened at heart. Bowing their head to Her, they went to Himavān. (90)

चौ०—सबु प्रसंगु गिरिपतिहि सुनावा । मदन दहन सुनि अति दुखु पावा ॥
बहुरि कहेउ रति कर बरदाना । सुनि हिमवंत बहुत सुखु माना ॥ १ ॥
हृदयँ बिचारि संभु प्रभुताई । सादर मुनिबर लिए बोलाई ॥
सुदिनु सुनखतु सुघरी सोचाई । बेगि बेदबिधि लगन धराई ॥ २ ॥
पत्री सप्तरिषिन्ह सोइ दीन्ही । गहि पद बिनय हिमाचल कीन्ही ॥
जाइ बिधिहि तिन्ह दीन्हि सो पाती । बाचत प्रीति न हृदयँ समाती ॥ ३ ॥
लगन बाचि अज सबहि सुनाई । हरषे मुनि सब सुर समुदाई ॥
सुमन बृष्टि नभ बाजन बाजे । मंगल कलस दसहुँ दिसि साजे ॥ ४ ॥

They related the whole episode to him and he was much grieved to hear how Śiva had burnt Love. The sages then told him of the boon granted to Rati and Himavān was much relieved to learn this. Recalling to his mind the glory of Śambhu, Himāchala respectfully summoned great sages. He had an auspicious date, asterism and hour ascertained and speedily got the exact time of wedding fixed and noted down according to the Vedic precepts. Himāchala handed over the note recording the exact time of wedding to the seven seers, and clasping their feet made entreaties to them. Calling on Brahmā they delivered the note to him; and as he went through it his heart overflowed with joy. Brahmā read the note aloud to all; the sages as well as the whole concourse of gods was delighted to hear it. Flowers were showered from the air, music flowed from various instruments and auspicious jars were placed in all directions. (1–4)

दो०—लगे सँवारन सकल सुर बाहन बिबिध बिमान ।
होहिं सगुन मंगल सुभद करहिं अपछरा गान ॥ ९१ ॥

All the gods began to adorn their vehicles and aerial cars of various kinds; happy and auspicious omens were visible and celestial damsels sang for joy. (91)

चौ०—सिवहि संभु गन करहिं सिंगारा । जटा मुकुट अहि मौरु सँवारा ॥
कुंडल कंकन पहिरे ब्याला । तन बिभूति पट केहरि छाला ॥ १ ॥
ससि ललाट सुंदर सिर गंगा । नयन तीनि उपबीत भुजंगा ॥
गरल कंठ उर नर सिर माला । असिव बेष सिवधाम कृपाला ॥ २ ॥
कर त्रिसूल अरु डमरु बिराजा । चले बसहँ चढ़ि बाजहिं बाजा ॥
देखि सिवहि सुरत्रिय मुसुकाहीं । बर लायक दुलहिनि जग नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
बिष्नु बिरंचि आदि सुरब्राता । चढ़ि चढ़ि बाहन चले बराता ॥
सुर समाज सब भाँति अनूपा । नहिं बरात दूलह अनुरूपा ॥ ४ ॥

The attendants of Śambhu began to adorn their lord. His matted locks were formed into a crown and decked with a crest of serpents. He had serpents for His ear-rings and bracelets, smeared His person with ashes and wrapped a lion's skin round His loins. He bore the crescent on His charming brow and the river Gaṅgā on the crown of His head and had three eyes and a serpent for the sacred thread. His throat was black with the poison swallowed by Him at the beginning of creation and had a wreath of human skulls about His neck. Thus clad in a ghastly attire, He was nonetheless an embodiment of blessings and merciful to the core. A trident and a Ḍamaru (a small drum shaped like an hour-glass) adorned His hands. Śiva rode on a bull while musical instruments played. Female divinities smiled to see Him. "The world has no bride worthy of the bridegroom," they said to one another. Viṣṇu, Brahmā and hosts of other gods joined the bridegroom's procession and rode on their respective vehicles. The gathering of the immortals was incomparable in every respect; the procession, however, was hardly worthy of the bridegroom. (1—4)

दो०—बिष्नु कहा अस बिहसि तब बोलि सकल दिसिराज ।
बिलग बिलग होइ चलहु सब निज निज सहित समाज ॥ ९२ ॥

God Viṣṇu then called all the guardians of the different quarters and smilingly said, "Every one of you should march separately, each with his own retinue. (92)

चौ०—बर अनुहारि बरात न भाई । हँसी करैहहु पर पुर जाई ॥
बिष्नु बचन सुनि सुर मुसुकाने । निज निज सेन सहित बिलगाने ॥ १ ॥
मनहीं मन महेसु मुसुकाहीं । हरि के बिंग्य बचन नहिं जाहीं ॥
अति प्रिय बचन सुनत प्रिय केरे । भृंगिहि प्रेरि सकल गन टेरे ॥ २ ॥
सिव अनुसासन सुनि सब आए । प्रभु पद जलज सीस तिन्ह नाए ॥
नाना बाहन नाना बेषा । बिहसे सिव समाज निज देखा ॥ ३ ॥
कोउ मुखहीन बिपुल मुख काहू । बिनु पद कर कोउ बहु पद बाहू ॥
बिपुल नयन कोउ नयन बिहीना । रिष्टपुष्ट कोउ अति तनखीना ॥ ४ ॥

"The procession, brothers, is no way worthy of the bridegroom; you will make yourself a butt of ridicule in a strange city !" Hearing the words of Viṣṇu, the gods smiled and parted, each with his own group. The great Lord Śiva laughed in His sleeves and noticed that Śrī Hari's humour never failed. As soon as He heard these most pleasing remarks of His beloved friend, He sent Bhṛṅg, to call all His attendants. And they all came when they heard Śiva's command and bowed their head at the lotus feet of their lord. Śiva laughed to see His host in their motley attire riding every kind of vehicle. Some were headless, while others were hydra-headed monsters; some were without hands and feet, while others had numerous hands and feet. Some had numerous eyes, while others had no eyes at all; some were stout and well-built, while others had very slim bodies. (1—4)

छं०—तन खीन कोउ अति पीन पावन कोउ अपावन गति धरें ।
भूषन कराल कपाल कर सब सद्य सोनित तन भरें ॥

खर स्वान सुअर सृकाल मुख गन बेष अगनित को गनै ।
बहु जिनस प्रेत पिसाच जोगि जमात बरनत नहिं बनै ॥

Some had lean and thin bodies, while others were very stout; some were tidy, while others had dirty habits. They had frightful ornaments, carried skulls in their hands and were all smeared with fresh blood. They bore heads of donkeys, dogs, swine and jackals and the varieties of their clothes could not be counted. The troops of spirits, goblins and fairies of various kinds beggared description.

सो०—नाचहिं गावहिं गीत परम तरंगी भूत सब ।
देखत अति बिपरीत बोलहिं बचन बिचित्र बिधि ॥ ९३ ॥

The ghosts danced and sang; they were all extremely fantastic. They looked most absurd and spoke words in a peculiar style. (93)

चौ०—जस दूलहु तसि बनी बराता । कौतुक बिबिध होहिं मग जाता ॥
इहाँ हिमाचल रचेउ बिताना । अति बिचित्र नहिं जाइ बखाना ॥ १ ॥
सैल सकल जहँ लगि जग माहीं । लघु बिसाल नहिं बरनि सिराहीं ॥
बन सागर सब नदीं तलावा । हिमगिरि सब कहुँ नेवत पठावा ॥ २ ॥
कामरूप सुंदर तन धारी । सहित समाज सहित बर नारी ॥
गए सकल तुहिनाचल गेहा । गावहिं मंगल सहित सनेहा ॥ ३ ॥
प्रथमहिं गिरि बहु गृह सँवराए । जथाजोगु तहँ तहँ सब छाए ॥
पुर सोभा अवलोकि सुहाई । लागइ लघु बिरंचि निपुनाई ॥ ४ ॥

The procession was now quite worthy of the bridegroom; the processionists indulged in gaieties of various kinds as they went along. On the other side Himāchala erected a most wonderful pavilion which beggared description. As many mountains as existed in the world, small or big, more than man can count, and the whole host of woods, seas, rivers and ponds* were all invited by Himachala. Capable of taking any form they liked, they assumed handsome figures and repaired to the house of Himālaya along with their retinues and fair consorts. They all sang festive songs out of affection. The mountain-king had already caused a number of houses to be tastefully decorated; all the guests were lodged therein, each occupying a house befitting one's status. The splendour of the city was so captivating that after a glance at it the creative skill of Brahma himself looked very small. (1–4)

छं०—लघु लाग बिधि की निपुनता अवलोकि पुर सोभा सही ।
बन बाग कूप तड़ाग सरिता सुभग सब सक को कही ॥
मंगल बिपुल तोरन पताका केतु गृह गृह सोहहीं ।
बनिता पुरुष सुंदर चतुर छबि देखि मुनि मन मोहहीं ॥

* According to the Hindu scriptures every natural object is believed to be presided over by a spirit; it is these spirits that are referred to here.

A glance at the beautiful city made the creative art of Brahmā himself pale into insignificance. Groves and gardens, wells and ponds and rivers, all looked charming beyond words. Every house was decorated with a number of triumphal arches, flags and buntings. Men and women of the city were so lovely and ingenious that they enraptured the hearts even of sages.

दो०—जगदंबा जहँ अवतरी सो पुरु बरनि कि जाइ।
रिद्धि सिद्धि संपत्ति सुख नित नूतन अधिकाइ॥९४॥

The city in which the Mother of the universe had bodied Herself forth baffled all description. Prosperity and success, wealth and happiness were always on the increase there and presented a new aspect. (94)

चौ०—नगर निकट बरात सुनि आई। पुर खरभरु सोभा अधिकाई॥
करि बनाव सजि बाहन नाना। चले लेन सादर अगवाना॥१॥
हियँ हरषे सुर सेन निहारी। हरिहि देखि अति भए सुखारी॥
सिव समाज जब देखन लागे। बिडरि चले बाहन सब भागे॥२॥
धरि धीरजु तहँ रहे सयाने। बालक सब लै जीव पराने॥
गएँ भवन पूछहिं पितु माता। कहहिं बचन भय कंपित गाता॥३॥
कहिअ काह कहि जाइ न बाता। जम कर धार किधौं बरिआता॥
बरु बौराह बसहँ असवारा। ब्याल कपाल बिभूषन छारा॥४॥

When it was heard that the bridegroom's procession was close at hand, there was commotion in the city, which added to its charm. Adorning themselves and decorating their vehicles of various kinds, a party proceeded in advance to receive the procession with due honour. They were gladdened at heart to see the gathering of the immortals. And they were all the more happy to behold Śrī Hari (Viṣṇu). But when they started looking at Śiva's retinue, every animal they rode started back and fled in panic. The adults recovered themselves and remained where they were, while every child that came ran for its life. On their reaching home when their parents questioned them, they spoke as follows, their limbs still shaking with fear, "What shall we say? The sight was such as could not be described. We wonder whether it was a bridegroom's procession or the army of Death. The bridegroom is a maniac, riding on a bull; serpents, skulls and ashes are his ornaments. (1—4)

छं०—तन छार ब्याल कपाल भूषन नगन जटिल भयंकरा।
सँग भूत प्रेत पिसाच जोगिनि बिकट मुख रजनीचरा॥
जो जिअत रहिहि बरात देखत पुन्य बड़ तेहि कर सही।
देखिहि सो उमा बिबाहु घर घर बात असि लरिकन्ह कही॥

"His body is smeared with ashes and adorned with serpents and skulls. He is naked, has matted hair on his head and is dreadful to look at. He is accompanied by ghosts and evil spirits, goblins and fairies and demons with a

frightful countenance. He who survives on seeing the bridegroom's procession is a man of great luck indeed and he alone will witness the wedding of Umā." These were the words uttered by the children from house to house.

दो०—समुझि महेस समाज सब जननि जनक मुसुकाहिं ।
बाल बुझाए बिबिध बिधि निडर होहु डरु नाहिं ॥ ९५ ॥

The parents smiled; for they knew that the children were talking of Śiva's retinue. They reassured the children in many ways and said, "Be not afraid, there is no cause for fear." (95)

चौ०—लै अगवान बरातहि आए । दिए सबहि जनवास सुहाए ॥
मैनाँ सुभ आरती सँवारी । संग सुमंगल गावहिं नारी ॥ १ ॥
कंचन थार सोह बर पानी । परिछन चली हरहि हरषानी ॥
बिकट बेष रुद्रहि जब देखा । अबलन्ह उर भय भयउ बिसेषा ॥ २ ॥
भागि भवन पैठीं अति त्रासा । गए महेसु जहाँ जनवासा ॥
मैना हृदयँ भयउ दुखु भारी । लीन्ही बोलि गिरीसकुमारी ॥ ३ ॥
अधिक सनेहँ गोद बैठारी । स्याम सरोज नयन भरे बारी ॥
जेहिं बिधि तुम्हहि रूपु अस दीन्हा । तेहिं जड़ बरु बाउर कस कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

The party which had gone ahead to receive the bridegroom's procession returned with the procession and assigned beautiful lodgings to all the guests. Menā (Pārvatī's mother) kindled auspicious lights for waving round the bridegroom and the women accompanying her sang melodious songs of rejoicing. A salver of gold adorned Menā's fair hands and she proceeded to welcome Lord Hara with great delight. The women were seized with excessive fear when they saw Rudra (Śiva) in frightful accoutrements. They fled in great panic and entered the house; while the great Lord Śiva repaired to the lodgings of the bridegroom's party. Menā was sore distressed at heart and sent for Pārvatī. With great affection she seated her in her lap; and tears rushed to her eyes, which resembled a pair of blue lotuses. "To think that the Creator, who has made you so beautiful, should have been stupid enough to give you such a raving madman for a bridegroom! (1—4)

छं०—कस कीन्ह बरु बौराह बिधि जेहिं तुम्हहि सुंदरता दई ।
जो फलु चहिअ सुरतरुहिं सो बरबस बबूरहिं लागई ॥
तुम्ह सहित गिरि तें गिरौं पावक जरौं जलनिधि महुँ परौं ।
घरु जाउ अपजसु होउ जग जीवत बिबाहु न हौं करौं ॥

"How strange that the Creator, who has made you so lovely, should have given you a crazy fellow for a bridegroom! A fruit which should have adorned the wish-yielding tree is helplessly appearing on a thorny Babool. Taking you in my arms I would sooner fall from a mountain-top, cast myself into the flames or drown myself into the sea. Let my home be ruined and let me earn a bad reputation throughout the world; but in no case would I marry you with this maniac so long as there is life in me."

दो०—भईं बिकल अबला सकल दुखित देखि गिरिनारि।
करि बिलापु रोदति बदति सुता सनेहु सँभारि ॥ ९६ ॥

All the ladies assembled there were distressed when they saw the consort of Himāchala sad. Recalling the affection of her daughter she wailed, wept and exclaimed as below:— (96)

चौ०—नारद कर मैं काह बिगारा। भवनु मोर जिन्ह बसत उजारा ॥
अस उपदेसु उमहि जिन्ह दीन्हा। बौरे बरहि लागि तपु कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
साचेहुँ उन्ह कें मोह न माया। उदासीन धनु धामु न जाया ॥
पर घर घालक लाज न भीरा। बाँझ कि जान प्रसव कै पीरा ॥ २ ॥
जननिहि बिकल बिलोकि भवानी। बोली जुत बिबेक मृदु बानी ॥
अस बिचारि सोचहि मति माता। सो न टरइ जो रचइ बिधाता ॥ ३ ॥
करम लिखा जौं बाउर नाहू। तौ कत दोसु लगाइअ काहू ॥
तुम्ह सन मिटहिं कि बिधि के अंका। मातु ब्यर्थ जनि लेहु कलंका ॥ ४ ॥

"What harm have I done to Nārada that he should have ruined my happy home and tendered such advice to Umā as made her undergo penance for securing a crazy husband ? In good sooth the sage is passionless and without affection; he has no wealth, no dwelling and no wife and is indifferent to all. That is why he destroys others' homes. He has neither shame nor fear. What does a barren woman know of the pains of childbirth ?" Seeing Her mother distressed, Bhavānī addressed the following soft yet prudent words to her. "Whatever is ordained by Providence cannot be altered. Realizing this be not worried, mother. If I am destined to have a crazy husband, why should anyone be blamed for it ? Can you alter the decree of Providence ? Therefore, take no reproach on you unnecessarily. (1—4)

छं०—जनि लेहु मातु कलंकु करुना परिहरहु अवसर नहीं।
दुखु सुखु जो लिखा लिलार हमरें जाब जहँ पाउब तहीं ॥
सुनि उमा बचन बिनीत कोमल सकल अबला सोचहीं।
बहु भाँति बिधिहि लगाइ दूषन नयन बारि बिमोचहीं ॥

"Take no reproach on you; cease lamenting: this is no occasion for it. The amount of joy and sorrow that has fallen to my lot I must reap wherever I go." Hearing the soft and polite words of Umā all the ladies became sad. They blamed the Creator in many ways and tears flowed from their eyes.

दो०—तेहि अवसर नारद सहित अरु रिषि सप्त समेत।
समाचार सुनि तुहिनगिरि गवने तुरत निकेत ॥ ९७ ॥

On hearing the news that very moment Himāchala came to his house along with Nārada and the seven seers. (97)

चौ०—तब नारद सबही समुझावा । पूरुब कथाप्रसंगु सुनावा ॥
मयना सत्य सुनहु मम बानी । जगदंबा तव सुता भवानी ॥ १ ॥
अजा अनादि सक्ति अबिनासिनि । सदा संभु अरधंग निवासिनि ॥
जग संभव पालन लय कारिनि । निज इच्छा लीला बपु धारिनि ॥ २ ॥
जनमीं प्रथम दच्छ गृह जाई । नामु सती सुंदर तनु पाई ॥
तहँहुँ सती संकरहि बिबाहीं । कथा प्रसिद्ध सकल जग माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
एक बार आवत सिव संगा । देखेउ रघुकुल कमल पतंगा ॥
भयउ मोहु सिव कहा न कीन्हा । भ्रम बस बेषु सीय कर लीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

Then Nārada reassured them all, narrating to them the past history of Umā. He said, "Menā, hear my true words: your daughter is none else than Bhavānī (the eternal Consort of Śiva), Mother of the universe. She is the unborn and imperishable divine energy, which has no beginning; She is Śambhu's inseparable half. She creates, maintains and then dissolves the universe and assumes the semblance of a material form of Her own will. First She was born in the house of Dakṣa. Satī was Her name and charming was Her form. Even in that incarnation Satī was married with Śankara. The story is well-known throughout the world. One day, while She was returning home with Śiva, She beheld Śrī Rāma, who is a sun as it were to the lotus-like race of Raghu. Bewildered by His sight, She did not listen to Śiva's advice and was beguiled into assuming the disguise of Sītā. (1—4)

छं०—सिय बेषु सतीं जो कीन्ह तेहिं अपराध संकर परिहरीं ।
हर बिरहँ जाइ बहोरि पितु कें जग्य जोगानल जरीं ॥
अब जनमि तुम्हरे भवन निज पति लागि दारुन तपु किया ।
अस जानि संसय तजहु गिरिजा सर्बदा संकर प्रिया ॥

"Śankara repudiated Her because She had offended Him by assuming the disguise of Sītā. Separated from Hara, She then visited the sacrifice undertaken by Her father and burnt Herself in the fire of Yoga (meditation) there. Now, reborn in your house, She has undergone terrible penance for the sake of Her lord. Knowing this, give up all doubt; Girijā (your daughter) is ever beloved of Śankara."

दो०—सुनि नारद के बचन तब सब कर मिटा बिषाद ।
छन महुँ ब्यापेउ सकल पुर घर घर यह संवाद ॥ ९८ ॥

When they heard Nārada's explanation, the sadness of all was dispersed. In a trice the news spread from house to house throughout the city. (98)

चौ०—तब मयना हिमवंतु अनंदे । पुनि पुनि पारबती पद बंदे ॥
नारि पुरुष सिसु जुबा सयाने । नगर लोग सब अति हरषाने ॥ १ ॥
लगे होन पुर मंगलगाना । सजे सबहिं हाटक घट नाना ॥
भाँति अनेक भई जेवनारा । सूपसास्त्र जस कछु ब्यवहारा ॥ २ ॥

सो जेवनार कि जाइ बखानी । बसहिं भवन जेहिं मातु भवानी ॥
सादर बोले सकल बराती । बिष्नु बिरंचि देव सब जाती ॥ ३ ॥
बिबिधि पाँति बैठी जेवनारा । लागे परुसन निपुन सुआरा ॥
नारि बृंद सुर जेवँत जानी । लगीं देन गारीं मृदु बानी ॥ ४ ॥

Then Menā and her consort Himavān rejoiced and bowed at Pārvatī's feet again and again. All the citizens, including men, women and children, youngmen as well as elderly people, were immensely delighted. Festive songs began to be sung in the city; vases of gold of every pattern were displayed by all. Dishes of various kinds were prepared in accordance with the processes given in gastrological works. Is it ever possible to describe the varieties of dishes prepared in the house where lived Mother Bhavānī? Himāchala respectfully summoned all the members of the bridegroom's party, including Viṣṇu, Brahmā and other gods of all classes. The dinner guests sat in many rows; and expert cooks began to serve. Finding the gods dining, batches of women began to banter and rail at them in pleasant strains.

(1—4)

छं०—गारीं मधुर स्वर देहिं सुंदरि बिंग्य बचन सुनावहीं ।
भोजनु करहिं सुर अति बिलंबु बिनोदु सुनि सचु पावहीं ॥
जेवँत जो बढ़्यो अनंदु सो मुख कोटिहूँ न परै कह्यो ।
अचवाँइ दीन्हे पान गवने बास जहँ जाको रह्यो ॥

Charming women railed in sweet strains and poured innuendoes. The gods felt much amused to hear them and dined for an unusually long time. The joy that swelled at the dinner cannot be described even with millions of tongues. Having been served with water for rinsing their mouths at the end of the dinner, they were given betel-leaves; and then they returned to their respective lodgings.

दो०—बहुरि मुनिन्ह हिमवंत कहुँ लगन सुनाई आइ ।
समय बिलोकि बिबाह कर पठए देव बोलाइ ॥ ९९ ॥

The seven sages called once more and read out to Himavān the note recording the time fixed for the wedding; and perceiving that the hour had arrived, the latter sent for the gods. (99)

चौ०—बोलि सकल सुर सादर लीन्हे । सबहि जथोचित आसन दीन्हे ॥
बेदी बेद बिधान सँवारी । सुभग सुमंगल गावहिं नारी ॥ १ ॥
सिंघासनु अति दिब्य सुहावा । जाइ न बरनि बिरंचि बनावा ॥
बैठे सिव बिप्रन्ह सिरु नाई । हृदयँ सुमिरि निज प्रभु रघुराई ॥ २ ॥
बहुरि मुनीसन्ह उमा बोलाईं । करि सिंगारु सखीं लै आईं ॥
देखत रूपु सकल सुर मोहे । बरनै छबि अस जग कबि को है ॥ ३ ॥
जगदंबिका जानि भव भामा । सुरन्ह मनहिं मन कीन्ह प्रनामा ॥
सुंदरता मरजाद भवानी । जाइ न कोटिहुँ बदन बखानी ॥ ४ ॥

Himavān politely sent for all the gods and assigned an appropriate seat to each of them. An altar was prepared in accordance with the Vedic ritual and women chanted charming festal strains. A divinely beautiful throne with the images of a pair of lions for its arms was placed on the altar; being a handiwork of the Creator himself, it beggared description. Bowing His head to the Brahmans and calling to His mind His own Master, the Lord of Raghus, Śiva took His seat on the throne. The great sages then sent for Umā, who was brought in by Her girl companions richly adorned. All the gods were enraptured at Her beauty. What poet in the world could describe such loveliness ? Recognizing in Her the Mother of the universe and Spouse of Śiva, the divinities mentally bowed to Her. The perfection of beauty that Bhavānī was could not be adequately praised even with millions of tongues. (1—4)

छं०—कोटिहुँ बदन नहिं बनै बरनेत जग जननि सोभा महा ।
सकुचहिं कहत श्रुति सेष सारद मंदमति तुलसी कहा ॥
छबि खानि मातु भवानि गवनीं मध्य मंडप सिव जहाँ ।
अवलोकि सकहिं न सकुच पति पद कमल मनु मधुकरु तहाँ ॥

The superb beauty of the Mother of the universe could not be described even with millions of tongues. When even the Vedas, Śeṣa (the serpent-god) and Śāradā (the goddess of learning) shrink abashed, of what account is the dull-witted Tulasīdāsa ? Mother Bhavānī, the mine of beauty, walked to the middle of the pavilion, where Śiva was. Out of shyness She could not gaze on Her lord's lotus feet, although Her heart was fixed thereon like a bee.

दो०—मुनि अनुसासन गनपतिहि पूजेउ संभु भवानि ।
कोउ सुनि संसय करै जनि सुर अनादि जियँ जानि ॥ १०० ॥

At the direction of the sages Śambhu and Bhavānī paid divine honours to Lord Gaṇapati. Let no one be puzzled to hear this; for one should bear in mind that gods have existed from time without beginning.* (100)

चौ०—जसि बिबाह कै बिधि श्रुति गाई । महामुनिन्ह सो सब करवाई ॥
गहि गिरीस कुस कन्या पानी । भवहि समरपीं जानि भवानी ॥ १ ॥
पानिग्रहन जब कीन्ह महेसा । हियँ हरषे तब सकल सुरेसा ॥
बेदमंत्र मुनिबर उच्चरहीं । जय जय जय संकर सुर करहीं ॥ २ ॥
बाजहिं बाजन बिबिध बिधाना । सुमनबृष्टि नभ भै बिधि नाना ॥
हर गिरिजा कर भयउ बिबाहू । सकल भुवन भरि रहा उछाहू ॥ ३ ॥
दासीं दास तुरग रथ नागा । धेनु बसन मनि बस्तु बिभागा ॥
अन्न कनकभाजन भरि जाना । दाइज दीन्ह न जाइ बखाना ॥ ४ ॥

* Lord Gaṇapati is reputed to be an offspring of Śiva and Pārvatī. It may, therefore, be asked how He came to be worshipped by the divine pair even at the time of their wedding. The poet meets this question by stating that Gaṇeśa and the other gods are eternal and unbegotten and that they only appear to be born.

The great sages had the nuptial ceremony performed in all its details as laid down in the Vedas. Taking sacred Kuśa grass in his hand and holding the bride by Her hand, the mountain-king Himālaya made Her over to Bhava (Śiva) knowing Her to be His eternal consort. When the great Lord Śiva took the hand of the bride, all the great gods were glad at heart. The principal sages chanted the Vedic formulas, while the gods exclaimed, "Victory, victory, all victory to Śankara!" Musical instruments of various kinds were sounded and flowers of different varieties were rained down from the heavens. The wedding of Hara and Girijā was thus concluded. A spirit of rejoicing pervaded the whole universe. Men-servants and maid-servants, horses and chariots, elephants and cows, raiment, jewels and various other articles and even so cart-loads of foodgrains and gold utensils were given as dowry, which was more than one could describe. (1—4)

छं०—दाइज दियो बहु भाँति पुनि कर जोरि हिमभूधर कह्यो ।
का देउँ पूरनकाम संकर चरन पंकज गहि रह्यो ॥
सिवँ कृपासागर ससुर कर संतोषु सब भाँतिहिं कियो ।
पुनि गहे पद पाथोज मयनाँ प्रेम परिपूरन हियो ॥

Himāchala gave presents of various kinds as dowry; then, joining his palms, he said, "I have nothing to give You, Śankara; You have all Your desires sated!" He could say no more and remained clasping the latter's feet. The ocean of mercy that Śiva is reassured His father-in-law in every possible way. Then Menā, with her heart overflowing with love, clasped His lotus feet and said:—

दो०—नाथ उमा मम प्रान सम गृहकिंकरी करेहु ।
छमेहु सकल अपराध अब होइ प्रसन्न बरु देहु ॥ १०१ ॥

"Lord, Umā is dear to me as life; take her as a maid-servant of Your house and forgive all her faults. Be pleased to grant this boon to me." (101)

चौ०—बहु बिधि संभु सासु समुझाई । गवनी भवन चरन सिरु नाई ॥
जननीं उमा बोलि तब लीन्ही । लै उछंग सुंदर सिख दीन्ही ॥ १ ॥
करेहु सदा संकर पद पूजा । नारिधरमु पति देउ न दूजा ॥
बचन कहत भरे लोचन बारी । बहुरि लाइ उर लीन्हि कुमारी ॥ २ ॥
कत बिधि सृजी नारि जग माहीं । पराधीन सपनेहुँ सुखु नाहीं ॥
भै अति प्रेम बिकल महतारी । धीरजु कीन्ह कुसमय बिचारी ॥ ३ ॥
पुनि पुनि मिलति परति गहि चरना । परम प्रेमु कछु जाइ न बरना ॥
सब नारिन्ह मिलि भेटि भवानी । जाइ जननि उर पुनि लपटानी ॥ ४ ॥

Śambhu comforted His mother-in-law in ways more than one; and she returned home bowing her head at His feet. The mother then sent for Umā, and taking Her into her lap gave Her the following excellent advice: "Ever adore the feet of Śankara: this sums up the duty of a wife. Her husband is her deity; there is no other god for her." As she spoke these words, her eyes filled with tears

and she pressed the girl to her bosom. "Why has god created woman in this world ? One who is dependent on others can never dream of happiness." The mother was overwhelmed with emotion; but knowing as she did that it was not an opportune moment for betraying one's weakness, she recovered herself. Menā met Pārvatī again and again and fell down clasping the girl's feet; her supreme love was beyond all words. Bidding adieu to all the ladies Bhavānī ran and clung to her mother's breast once more. (1—4)

छं०—जननिहि बहुरि मिलि चली उचित असीस सब काहूँ दईं ।
फिरि फिरि बिलोकति मातु तन तब सखीं लै सिव पहिं गईं ॥
जाचक सकल संतोषि संकरु उमा सहित भवन चले ।
सब अमर हरषे सुमन बरषि निसान नभ बाजे भले ॥

Taking leave of Her mother once more, Bhavānī departed; everyone uttered appropriate blessings to Her. She often turned back to have a look at Her mother; Her girl companions then took Her to Śiva. Having gratified all beggars, Śankara proceeded to His home (Mount Kailāsa) with Umā. All the divinities delightfully rained down flowers and kettledrums produced a charming sound in the heavens.

दो०—चले संग हिमवंतु तब पहुँचावन अति हेतु ।
बिबिध भाँति परितोषु करि बिदा कीन्ह बृषकेतु ॥ १०२ ॥

Himavān then accompanied Śiva in order to escort Him with great affection. Śiva, however, sent him back, consoling him in various ways. (102)

चौ०—तुरत भवन आए गिरिराई । सकल सैल सर लिए बोलाई ॥
आदर दान बिनय बहुमाना । सब कर बिदा कीन्ह हिमवाना ॥ १ ॥
जबहिं संभु कैलासहिं आए । सुर सब निज निज लोक सिधाए ॥
जगत मातु पितु संभु भवानी । तेहिं सिंगारु न कहउँ बखानी ॥ २ ॥
करहिं बिबिध बिधि भोग बिलासा । गनन्ह समेत बसहिं कैलासा ॥
हर गिरिजा बिहार नित नयऊ । एहि बिधि बिपुल काल चलि गयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
तब जनमेउ षटबदन कुमारा । तारकु असुरु समर जेहिं मारा ॥
आगम निगम प्रसिद्ध पुराना । षन्मुख जन्मु सकल जग जाना ॥ ४ ॥

The mountain-king returned home at once and summoned all other mountains and lakes. Himavān greeted them with due attention, gifts, polite words and great honour and allowed them all to depart. No sooner had Śambhu reached Mount Kailāsa than all the gods returned to their respective realms. Śambhu and Bhavānī are the parents of the universe; hence I refrain from portraying their amorous sports. Indulging in luxuries and enjoyments of various kinds the divine pair lived on Mount Kailāsa along with Their attendants. Hara and Girijā enjoyed some new delight every day. In this way a considerable time elapsed. Thereafter was born to them a boy with six heads, who (later on) killed the demon Tāraka in battle. The story of Ṣaṇmukha (the six-headed deity) is well-known in the Vedas, Tantras and Puraṇas, and the entire world knows it.

(1—4)

छं०—जगु जान षन्मुख जन्मु कर्मु प्रतापु पुरुषारथु महा।
तेहि हेतु मैं बृषकेतु सुत कर चरित संछेपहिं कहा॥
यह उमा संभु बिबाहु जे नर नारि कहहिं जे गावहीं।
कल्यान काज बिबाह मंगल सर्बदा सुखु पावहीं॥

The tale of the birth, exploits, glory and surpassing strength of Ṣaṇmukha is known to the whole world. That is why I have briefly touched the narrative of Śiva's son. Men and women who narrate or sing this story of the wedding of Umā and Śambhu shall ever rejoice in their auspicious undertakings as well as during festive occasions such as wedding etc.

दो०—चरित सिंधु गिरिजा रमन बेद न पावहिं पारु।
बरनै तुलसीदासु किमि अति मतिमंद गवाँरु॥ १०३॥

The exploits of Girijā's lord are illimitable like the ocean; even the Vedas cannot reach their end. How, then, can Tulasīdāsa, a most dull-witted clown, succeed in describing them ? (103)

चौ०—संभु चरित सुनि सरस सुहावा। भरद्वाज मुनि अति सुखु पावा॥
बहु लालसा कथा पर बाढ़ी। नयनन्हि नीरु रोमावलि ठाढ़ी॥ १॥
प्रेम बिबस मुख आव न बानी। दसा देखि हरषे मुनि ग्यानी॥
अहो धन्य तव जन्मु मुनीसा। तुम्हहि प्रान सम प्रिय गौरीसा॥ २॥
सिव पद कमल जिन्हहि रति नाहीं। रामहि ते सपनेहुँ न सोहाहीं॥
बिनु छल बिस्वनाथ पद नेहू। राम भगत कर लच्छन एहू॥ ३॥
सिव सम को रघुपति ब्रतधारी। बिनु अघ तजी सती असि नारी॥
पनु करि रघुपति भगति देखाई। को सिव सम रामहि प्रिय भाई॥ ४॥

Bharadwāja was much delighted to hear the sweet and charming story of Śambhu's deeds. His passion for hearing the story grew to be inordinate; tears rushed to his eyes and the hair on his body bristled with joy. Overpowered with emotion he could not utter a word. The enlightened sage Yājñavalkya was delighted to see his condition. "Blessed indeed is your birth, O great sage," he said, "to you the Lord of Gaurī is dear as life. Those who love not Śiva's lotus feet cannot even dream of pleasing Rama. A guileless love for Śiva's feet is the surest sign of a devotee of Rāma. Who is so faithful to the Lord of Raghus as Śiva, who renounced a sinless wife like Satī, and demonstrated ideal devotion to Rāma by His pledge of unswerving fidelity ? Brother, whom does Rāma hold so dear as Śiva ? (1–4)

दो०—प्रथमहिं मैं कहि सिव चरित बूझा मरमु तुम्हार।
सुचि सेवक तुम्ह राम के रहित समस्त बिकार॥ १०४॥

"Having begun by recounting the deeds of Śiva I have come to know your secret. You are indeed a faithful servant of Rāma, free from all impurities. (104)

चौ०—मैं जाना तुम्हार गुन सीला । कहउँ सुनहु अब रघुपति लीला ॥
सुनु मुनि आजु समागम तोरें । कहि न जाइ जस सुखु मन मोरें ॥ १ ॥
राम चरित अति अमित मुनीसा । कहि न सकहिं सत कोटि अहीसा ॥
तदपि जथाश्रुत कहउँ बखानी । सुमिरि गिरापति प्रभु धनुपानी ॥ २ ॥
सारद दारुनारि सम स्वामी । रामु सूत्रधर अंतरजामी ॥
जेहि पर कृपा करहिं जनु जानी । कवि उर अजिर नचावहिं बानी ॥ ३ ॥
प्रनवउँ सोइ कृपाल रघुनाथा । बरनउँ बिसद तासु गुन गाथा ॥
परम रम्य गिरिबरु कैलासू । सदा जहाँ सिव उमा निवासू ॥ ४ ॥

I have come to know your virtues and disposition. Listen, therefore, while I narrate the story of the Lord of Raghus. O sage, I cannot say how glad I am at this meeting with you today. O lord of sages, the exploits of Śrī Rāma are much beyond measure; even a thousand million Śeṣas (serpent-kings) cannot recount them. Nevertheless, fixing my thoughts on the Lord who wields a bow in His hand and is the lord of speech, I repeat the tale as I have heard it. Śāradā (the goddess of speech) is like a puppet; while Śrī Rāma, the inner controller of all, is the master of the puppet show, who holds the strings in his hands. When He blesses a poet knowing him to be a devotee, He causes the goddess to dance in the courtyard of his heart. To Him, the benevolent Lord of Raghus, I bow and commence the recital of His fair virtues. Of all mountains the most charming and the best is Kailāsa, where Śiva and Umā eternally dwell.

(1—4)

दो०—सिद्ध तपोधन जोगिजन सुर किंनर मुनिबृंद ।
बसहिं तहाँ सुकृती सकल सेवहिं सिव सुखकंद ॥ १०५ ॥

Hosts of Siddhas (adepts), ascetics and Yogīs (mystics), as well as gods, Kinnaras and sages, all lucky souls, reside there and adore Śiva, the root of all joy.

(105)

चौ०—हरि हर बिमुख धर्म रति नाहीं । ते नर तहँ सपनेहुँ नहिं जाहीं ॥
तेहि गिरि पर बट बिटप बिसाला । नित नूतन सुंदर सब काला ॥ १ ॥
त्रिबिध समीर सुसीतलि छाया । सिव बिश्राम बिटप श्रुति गाया ॥
एक बार तेहि तर प्रभु गयऊ । तरु बिलोकि उर अति सुखु भयऊ ॥ २ ॥
निज कर डासि नागरिपु छाला । बैठे सहजहिं संभु कृपाला ॥
कुंद इंदु दर गौर सरीरा । भुज प्रलंब परिधन मुनिचीरा ॥ ३ ॥
तरुन अरुन अंबुज सम चरना । नख दुति भगत हृदय तम हरना ॥
भुजग भूति भूषन त्रिपुरारी । आननु सरद चंद छबि हारी ॥ ४ ॥

Those who have their faces turned away from Hari and Hara and have no love for righteousness cannot even dream of going there. On the summit of that mountain exists a huge banyan tree, which is ever young and is charming during all seasons. Fanned by cool, soft and fragrant breezes, its shade is very refreshing. It is the favourite resort of Śiva, extolled by the Vedas.

Once upon a time the Lord betook Himself beneath the tree and was much gladdened at heart to see it. Spreading His tigerskin on the ground with His own hands, the all-merciful Śiva sat down casually. His body fair in hue as the jasmine, the moon and the conch-shell; arms of inordinate length; a hermit's covering, consisting of the bark of trees, wrapped round His loins; His feet resembling a pair of full blown red lotuses and their toe-nails shedding a lustre which dispelled the darkness of the devotee's heart; serpents and the ashes serving as ornaments of the Slayer of Tripura and His countenance eclipsing the splendour even of the autumnal full moon; (1–4)

दो०—जटा मुकुट सुरसरित सिर लोचन नलिन बिसाल ।
नीलकंठ लावन्य निधि सोह बाल बिधु भाल ॥ १०६ ॥

With His twisted coils of hair for a crown and the celestial stream (the Gangā) adorning His head, eyes as big as a pair of lotuses, throat dark with poison and with the crescent shining on His brow, the Lord looked like a veritable mine of beauty. (106)

चौ०—बैठे सोह कामरिपु कैसें । धरें सरीरु सांतरसु जैसें ॥
पारबती भल अवसरु जानी । गईं संभु पहिं मातु भवानी ॥ १ ॥
जानि प्रिया आदरु अति कीन्हा । बाम भाग आसनु हर दीन्हा ॥
बैठीं सिव समीप हरषाई । पूरुब जन्म कथा चित आई ॥ २ ॥
पति हियँ हेतु अधिक अनुमानी । बिहसि उमा बोलीं प्रिय बानी ॥
कथा जो सकल लोक हितकारी । सोइ पूछन चह सैलकुमारी ॥ ३ ॥
बिस्वनाथ मम नाथ पुरारी । त्रिभुवन महिमा बिदित तुम्हारी ॥
चर अरु अचर नाग नर देवा । सकल करहिं पद पंकज सेवा ॥ ४ ॥

Seated there, the Destroyer of Cupid looked like an incarnation of the sentiment of Quietism. Finding it a good opportunity, Mother Bhavānī called on Śambhu. In recognition of Her wifely love Lord Hara showed Her great courtesy and assigned Her a seat on His left side. Pārvatī gladly sat down beside Śiva and recalled the history of Her past life. Presuming that Her lord cherished in His heart greater love for Her than before, Umā smilingly spoke the following sweet words to Him: the Daughter of Himālaya sought to elicit from Her lord the story which is profitable to the whole world. "O Lord of the universe, O my Master, O slayer of the demon Tripura! Your glory is known to all the three spheres. Animate as well inanimate beings, Nāgas, men and gods, all do homage to Your lotus feet. (1–4)

दो०—प्रभु समरथ सर्बग्य सिव सकल कला गुन धाम ।
जोग ग्यान बैराग्य निधि प्रनत कलपतरु नाम ॥ १०७ ॥

"My lord, You are all-powerful, all-wise and all-blissful; You are a repository of all arts and virtues and a storehouse of Yoga (askesis), wisdom and dispassion. Your Name is a wish-yielding tree as it were to the suppliant. (107)

चौ०—जौं मो पर प्रसन्न सुखरासी। जानिअ सत्य मोहि निज दासी॥
तौ प्रभु हरहु मोर अग्याना। कहि रघुनाथ कथा बिधि नाना॥ १॥
जासु भवनु सुरतरु तर होई। सहि कि दरिद्र जनित दुखु सोई॥
ससिभूषन अस हृदयँ बिचारी। हरहु नाथ मम मति भ्रम भारी॥ २॥
प्रभु जे मुनि परमारथबादी। कहहिं राम कहुँ ब्रह्म अनादी॥
सेस सारदा बेद पुराना। सकल करहिं रघुपति गुन गाना॥ ३॥
तुम्ह पुनि राम राम दिन राती। सादर जपहु अनँग आराती॥
रामु सो अवध नृपति सुत सोई। की अज अगुन अलखगति कोई॥ ४॥

"O blissful Lord, if You are pleased with me and know me to be Your faithful servant, then, my Master, disperse my ignorance by repeating to me the various stories of the Lord of Raghus. Why should he who has his abode beneath a wish-yielding tree undergo the suffering born of want ? Bearing this in mind, O Lord with the crescent on the forehead, dispel the great confusion of my mind. O Lord, the sages who discourse on the supreme Reality speak of Rāma as the Brahma who has no beginning; Śeṣa and Śāradā, as well as the Vedas and the Purāṇas, all sing praises of the Lord of Raghus. You too, O Subduer of Love, reverently repeat the word 'Rāma' night and day. Is this Rāma the same as the son of the King of Ayodhyā or some other unborn, unqualified and imperceptible Being ?
(1–4)

दो०—जौं नृप तनय त ब्रह्म किमि नारि बिरहँ मति भोरि।
देखि चरित महिमा सुनत भ्रमति बुद्धि अति मोरि॥ १०८॥

"If a king's son, how could he be Brahma (the Infinite) ? And if he were Brahma, how could his mind get unhinged by the loss of his wife ? When I see his acts on the one hand, and hear of his glory on the other, my mind gets utterly confused.
(108)

चौ०—जौं अनीह ब्यापक बिभु कोऊ। कहहु बुझाइ नाथ मोहि सोऊ॥
अग्य जानि रिस उर जनि धरहू। जेहि बिधि मोह मिटै सोइ करहू॥ १॥
मैं बन दीखि राम प्रभुताई। अति भय बिकल न तुम्हहि सुनाई॥
तदपि मलिन मन बोधु न आवा। सो फलु भली भाँति हम पावा॥ २॥
अजहूँ कछु संसउ मन मोरें। करहु कृपा बिनवउँ कर जोरें॥
प्रभु तब मोहि बहु भाँति प्रबोधा। नाथ सो समुझि करहु जनि क्रोधा॥ ३॥
तब कर अस बिमोह अब नाहीं। रामकथा पर रुचि मन माहीं॥
कहहु पुनीत राम गुन गाथा। भुजगराज भूषन सुरनाथा॥ ४॥

"If, my lord, there is any other desireless, all-pervading and all-powerful Brahma, instruct me about the same. Be not angry at my folly, but take steps to wipe out my ignorance. In the wood (in my previous birth) I witnessed Śrī Rāma's glory, although I was too awe-stricken to tell You. Yet, my mind was so impure that I did not understand, and I reaped a good return for my folly. Some doubt still lingers in my mind. Be gracious to me, I implore

You with joined palms. Lord, You instructed me then in ways more than one; yet I did not understand. Do not allow this thought to anger You. I have no such delusion now; I find developed in me a taste for hearing the story of Rāma. Recount the sacred virtues of Śrī Rāma, O Lord of immortals, having the serpent-king (Śeṣa) for an ornament. (1—4)

दो०—बंदउँ पद धरि धरनि सिरु बिनय करउँ कर जोरि।
बरनहु रघुबर बिसद जसु श्रुति सिद्धांत निचोरि॥ १०९॥

"Placing my head on the ground, I adore Your feet and entreat You with joined palms to recount the unsullied glory of the Chief of Raghus, giving in substance the conclusion of the revealed texts (the Vedas) on the subject. (109)

चौ०—जदपि जोषिता नहिं अधिकारी। दासी मन क्रम बचन तुम्हारी॥
गूढ़उ तत्त्व न साधु दुरावहिं। आरत अधिकारी जहँ पावहिं॥ १॥
अति आरति पूछउँ सुरराया। रघुपति कथा कहहु करि दाया॥
प्रथम सो कारन कहहु बिचारी। निर्गुन ब्रह्म सगुन बपु धारी॥ २॥
पुनि प्रभु कहहु राम अवतारा। बालचरित पुनि कहहु उदारा॥
कहहु जथा जानकी बिबाहीं। राज तजा सो दूषन काहीं॥ ३॥
बन बसि कीन्हे चरित अपारा। कहहु नाथ जिमि रावन मारा॥
राज बैठि कीन्हीं बहु लीला। सकल कहहु संकर सुखसीला॥ ४॥

"Though as a woman I am not qualified to hear it, I am Your servant in thought, word and deed. Saints do not withhold even an esoteric truth wherever they find a man smitten with agony, and therefore qualified to receive it. I ask You with a heart sore distressed; be gracious enough to narrate the story of the Lord of Raghus. First tell me after a mature thought what makes the unqualified Brahma assume a qualified form. Then, my lord, relate the story of Śrī Rāma's descent, and tell me next the charming exploits of His childhood. Then let me know how He wedded Janaka's Daughter, Sītā, and the fault for which He had to renounce His father's kingdom later on. Then describe the innumerable deeds performed by Him while He lived in the forest; and further tell me, my lord, how He killed Rāvaṇa. Then relate, O blissful Śankara, all the numerous sports that were enacted by Him after His coronation. (1—4)

दो०—बहुरि कहहु करुनायतन कीन्ह जो अचरज राम।
प्रजा सहित रघुबंसमनि किमि गवने निज धाम॥ ११०॥

"Thereafter relate, O gracious Lord, the miracle wrought by Rāma, viz., how that Jewel of Raghu's line proceeded to His divine Abode along with all His subjects. (110)

चौ०—पुनि प्रभु कहहु सो तत्त्व बखानी। जेहिं बिग्यान मगन मुनि ग्यानी॥
भगति ग्यान बिग्यान बिरागा। पुनि सब बरनहु सहित बिभागा॥ १॥

औरउ राम रहस्य अनेका । कहहु नाथ अति बिमल बिबेका ॥
जो प्रभु मैं पूछा नहिं होई । सोउ दयाल राखहु जनि गोई ॥ २ ॥
तुम्ह त्रिभुवन गुर बेद बखाना । आन जीव पावँर का जाना ॥
प्रस्न उमा कै सहज सुहाई । छल बिहीन सुनि सिव मन भाई ॥ ३ ॥
हर हियँ राम चरित सब आए । प्रेम पुलक लोचन जल छाए ॥
श्रीरघुनाथ रूप उर आवा । परमानंद अमित सुख पावा ॥ ४ ॥

"Then expound, my lord, the truth in the realization of which enlightened sages remain absorbed. And thereafter discuss in detail the conceptions of Devotion, Jñāna or Knowledge of the formless Absolute, Vijñāna or the Knowledge of qualified Divinity with and without form, and Dispassion. Over and above this, O Lord of purest understanding, reveal to me the many other mysteries connected with Rāma. And if there be anything which I have omitted to ask, do not keep it back, my gracious lord. You are the preceptor of all the three spheres, so declare the Vedas; what can other poor creatures know?" Śiva was glad at heart to hear these questions of Umā, naturally pleasing and guileless as they were. All the exploits of Rāma flashed on His mind; the hair on His body bristled with rapture and His eyes filled with tears. The figure of. Śrī Rāma was reflected on the mirror of His heart. This brought immense joy to Śiva, who is an embodiment of supreme bliss Himself.

(1—4)

दो०—मगन ध्यान रस दंड जुग पुनि मन बाहेर कीन्ह ।
रघुपति चरित महेस तब हरषित बरनै लीन्ह ॥ १११ ॥

For an hour or so Śiva was lost in the ecstasy of meditation. He then recovered Himself and thereafter began joyfully to tell the story of Rāma. (111)

चौ०—झूठेउ सत्य जाहि बिनु जानें । जिमि भुजंग बिनु रजु पहिचानें ॥
जेहि जानें जग जाइ हेराई । जागें जथा सपन भ्रम जाई ॥ १ ॥
बंदउँ बालरूप सोइ रामू । सब सिधि सुलभ जपत जिसु नामू ॥
मंगल भवन अमंगल हारी । द्रवउ सो दसरथ अजिर बिहारी ॥ २ ॥
करि प्रनाम रामहि त्रिपुरारी । हरषि सुधा सम गिरा उचारी ॥
धन्य धन्य गिरिराजकुमारी । तुम्ह समान नहिं कोउ उपकारी ॥ ३ ॥
पूँछेहु रघुपति कथा प्रसंगा । सकल लोक जग पावनि गंगा ॥
तुम्ह रघुबीर चरन अनुरागी । कीन्हिहु प्रस्न जगत हित लागी ॥ ४ ॥

"Due to lack of knowledge about Śrī Rāma even the unreal passes for real, just as ignorance about a rope leads us to mistake it for a snake. Even so the moment we know Him the world of matter vanishes, just as the delusion of a dream disappears as soon as we wake up. Him do I reverence in the form of a Child, the repetition of whose Name brings all kinds of success within our easy reach. May that Home of bliss and Bane of woe take compassion on me,—He who sports in the courtyard of King Daśaratha." After thus paying homage to Rāma, the Slayer of the demon Tripura joyfully

spoke in mellifluous accents as follows: "You are indeed blessed and worthy of applause, O daughter of the mountain-king; there is no such benefactor as you. You have asked me to repeat the history of the Lord of Raghus, which is potent enough to sanctify all the spheres even as the Gangā purifies the whole world. You are full of love for the feet of the Hero of Raghu's race; You have put questions to Me only with an eye to the good of the world. (1–4)

दो०—राम कृपा तें पारबति सपनेहुँ तव मन माहिं।
सोक मोह संदेह भ्रम मम बिचार कछु नाहिं॥ ११२॥

"By the blessing of Rāma, O Pārvatī, not even in dream can grief, infatuation, doubt or error enter your mind, so far as I can judge. (112)

चौ०—तदपि असंका कीन्हिहु सोई। कहत सुनत सब कर हित होई॥
जिन्ह हरिकथा सुनी नहिं काना। श्रवन रंध्र अहिभवन समाना॥ १॥
नयनन्हि संत दरस नहिं देखा। लोचन मोरपंख कर लेखा॥
ते सिर कटु तुंबरि समतूला। जे न नमत हरि गुर पद मूला॥ २॥
जिन्ह हरि भगति हृदयँ नहिं आनी। जीवत सव समान तेइ प्रानी॥
जो नहिं करइ राम गुन गाना। जीह सो दादुर जीह समाना॥ ३॥
कुलिस कठोर निठुर सोइ छाती। सुनि हरि चरित न जो हरषाती॥
गिरिजा सुनहु राम कै लीला। सुर हित दनुज बिमोहनसीला॥ ४॥

"Yet you have expressed the same old doubts again, so that all those who repeat or hear this account may be benefited thereby. The ears of those who have never heard the stories of Śrī Hari are no better than snake-holes. The eyes of those who have not blessed them with the sight of saints are as good as the sham eyes in a peacock's tail. The heads that bow not at the soles of Śrī Hari or of one's preceptor are just like bitter pumpkins. Those who have cherished not in their heart the spirit of devotion to Śrī Hari are as good as dead, though living. The tongue that does not sing the praises of Rāma is just like the tongue of a frog. The heart which does not rejoice to hear the tales of Śrī Hari is hard as adamant and cruel indeed. Hear, O Girijā, the exploits of Śrī Rāma, which prove beneficial to the gods and mystify the demons. (1–4)

दो०—रामकथा सुरधेनु सम सेवत सब सुख दानि।
सतसमाज सुरलोक सब को न सुनै अस जानि॥ ११३॥

"Like the cow of plenty, the story of Rāma bestows all blessings on those who devote themselves to it; and the assemblages of saints are the various abodes of gods. Knowing this, who would not listen to it? (113)

चौ०—रामकथा सुंदर कर तारी। संसय बिहग उड़ावनिहारी॥
रामकथा कलि बिटप कुठारी। सादर सुनु गिरिराजकुमारी॥ १॥

राम नाम गुन चरित सुहाए । जनम करम अगनित श्रुति गाए ॥
जथा अनंत राम भगवाना । तथा कथा कीरति गुन नाना ॥ २ ॥
तदपि जथा श्रुत जसि मति मोरी । कहिहउँ देखि प्रीति अति तोरी ॥
उमा प्रस्न तव सहज सुहाई । सुखद संतसंमत मोहि भाई ॥ ३ ॥
एक बात नहिं मोहि सोहानी । जदपि मोह बस कहेहु भवानी ॥
तुम्ह जो कहा राम कोउ आना । जेहि श्रुति गाव धरहिं मुनि ध्याना ॥ ४ ॥

"The story of Rāma is the lovely clap of hand-palms, which scares away the birds of doubt. Even so the story of Rāma is an axe to the tree of Kaliyuga (the impurities of the Kali age); listen to it with reverence, O daughter of the mountain-king. The charming names of Śrī Rāma, as well as His virtues, stories, births and deeds have all been declared by the Vedas to be beyond number. As there is no end to the divine Rāma, even so His stories, glory and virtues are also endless. Yet, seeing your great love, I will tell them even as I have heard of them to the best of my intellectual capacity. Umā, your inquiries are naturally winning and delightful and such as are approved of by the saints; as for myself I am particularly pleased to hear them. But there was one thing, Bhavānī, which I did not like, although you uttered it under a spell of delusion: you suggested that the Rāma whom the Vedas extol and on whom the sages contemplate is someone else ! (1—4)

दो०—कहहिं सुनहिं अस अधम नर ग्रसे जे मोह पिसाच ।
पाखंडी हरि पद बिमुख जानहिं झूठ न साच ॥ ११४ ॥

"Such words are spoken and heard by those vile men alone who are possessed by the devil of infatuation, are impious and averse to the feet of Śrī Hari and know no difference between truth and falsehood. (114)

चौ०—अग्य अकोबिद अंध अभागी । काई बिषय मुकुर मन लागी ॥
लंपट कपटी कुटिल बिसेषी । सपनेहुँ संतसभा नहिं देखी ॥ १ ॥
कहहिं ते बेद असंमत बानी । जिन्ह कें सूझ लाभु नहिं हानी ॥
मुकुर मलिन अरु नयन बिहीना । राम रूप देखहिं किमि दीना ॥ २ ॥
जिन्ह कें अगुन न सगुन बिबेका । जल्पहिं कल्पित बचन अनेका ॥
हरिमाया बस जगत भ्रमाहीं । तिन्हहि कहत कछु अघटित नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
बातुल भूत बिबस मतवारे । ते नहिं बोलहिं बचन बिचारे ॥
जिन्ह कृत महामोह मद पाना । तिन्ह कर कहा करिअ नहिं काना ॥ ४ ॥

"Foolish, ignorant and blind wretches, the mirror of whose heart is clouded by the film of sensuality, lecherous, deceitful and grossly perverse, who have never seen an assemblage of holy men even in a dream and who have no sense of gain and loss, they alone make statements which are repugnant to the Vedas. The mirror of their heart is soiled and they have no eyes to see; how, then, can those wretched souls behold the beauty of Śrī Rāma ? For those who have no knowledge either of the unqualified Brahma or of qualified Divinity, who indulge in fantastic utterances of various kinds and who spin

round in this world under the influence of Śrī Hari's deluding potency, no assertion is too absurd to make. Those who are delirious or mad, those who are possessed and those who are inebriated do not talk sense. None should give ear to the ravings of those who have drunk the wine of infatuation. (1—4)

सो०—अस निज हृदयँ बिचारि तजु संसय भजु राम पद।
सुनु गिरिराजकुमारि भ्रम तम रबि कर बचन मम ॥ ११५ ॥

"Thus assured in your heart, discard all doubt and adore Śrī Rāma's feet. O daughter of the mountain-king, hear my words, which are sun-beams as it were for the darkness of error. (115)

चौ०—सगुनहि अगुनहि नहिं कछु भेदा। गावहिं मुनि पुरान बुध बेदा ॥
अगुन अरूप अलख अज जोई। भगत प्रेम बस सगुन सो होई ॥ १ ॥
जो गुन रहित सगुन सोइ कैसें। जलु हिम उपल बिलग नहिं जैसें ॥
जासु नाम भ्रम तिमिर पतंगा। तेहि किमि कहिअ बिमोह प्रसंगा ॥ २ ॥
राम सच्चिदानंद दिनेसा। नहिं तहँ मोह निसा लवलेसा ॥
सहज प्रकासरूप भगवाना। नहिं तहँ पुनि बिग्यान बिहाना ॥ ३ ॥
हरष बिषाद ग्यान अग्याना। जीव धर्म अहमिति अभिमाना ॥
राम ब्रह्म ब्यापक जग जाना। परमानंद परेस पुराना ॥ ४ ॥

"There is no difference between qualified Divinity and the unqualified Brahma: so declare the sages and men of wisdom, the Vedas and the Purāṇas. That which is attributeless and formless, imperceptible and unborn, becomes qualified under the influence of the devotee's love. How can the Absolute become qualified ? In the same way as water and the hail-stone are non-different in substance. Infatuation is out of the question for Him whose very Name is like the sun to the darkness of error. Śrī Rāma, who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss combined, is like the sun; the night of ignorance cannot subsist in Him even to the smallest degree. He is the Lord whose very being is light; there is no dawn of understanding in His case. (For the dawn presupposes night and night there is none in the sunlight of Śrī Rāma.) Joy and grief, knowledge and ignorance, egoism and pride—these are the characteristics of a Jīva (finite being). Śrī Rāma is the all-pervading Brahma; He is supreme bliss personified, the highest lord and the most ancient Being. The whole world knows it. (1—4)

दो०—पुरुष प्रसिद्ध प्रकास निधि प्रगट परावर नाथ।
रघुकुलमनि मम स्वामि सोइ कहि सिवँ नायउ माथ ॥ ११६ ॥

"He who is universally known as the Spirit, the fount of light, manifest in all forms and is the lord of life as well as of matter, that Jewel of Raghu's line is my Master." So saying Śiva bowed His head to Him. (116)

चौ०—निज भ्रम नहिं समुझहिं अग्यानी। प्रभु पर मोह धरहिं जड़ प्रानी ॥
जथा गगन घन पटल निहारी। झाँपेउ भानु कहहिं कुबिचारी ॥ १ ॥

चितव जो लोचन अंगुलि लाएँ । प्रगट जुगल ससि तेहि के भाएँ ॥
उमा राम बिषइक अस मोहा । नभ तम धूम धूरि जिमि सोहा ॥ २ ॥
बिषय करन सुर जीव समेता । सकल एक तें एक सचेता ॥
सब कर परम प्रकासक जोई । राम अनादि अवधपति सोई ॥ ३ ॥
जगत प्रकास्य प्रकासक रामू । मायाधीस ग्यान गुन धामू ॥
जासु सत्यता तें जड़ माया । भास सत्य इव मोह सहाया ॥ ४ ॥

"Fools do not perceive their own error; on the other hand, those stupid creatures attribute infatuation to the Lord, just as on seeing the sky covered with clouds, men of unsound judgment declare that the sun has been screened by the clouds. To him who sees with a finger stuck into his eyes the moon appears as doubled. Umā, infatuation is attributed to Rāma in the same way as darkness, smoke or dust appears in the sky The objects of the senses, the senses and their presiding deities as well as the Jīva (embodied soul)—all these derive their illumination one from the other. (That is to say, the objects are illumined by the senses, the senses are illumined by their presiding deities and the deities presiding over the senses are illumined by the conscious Self.) The supreme illuminator of them all is the eternal Rāma, King of Ayodhyā. The world of matter is the object of illumination, while Rāma is its illuminator. He is the lord of Māyā and the abode of wisdom and virtues. It is due to His reality that even unconscious Matter appears as real through ignorance.

(1—4)

दो०—रजत सीप महुँ भास जिमि जथा भानु कर बारि ।
जदपि मृषा तिहुँ काल सोइ भ्रम न सकइ कोउ टारि ॥ ११७ ॥

"Just as a shell is mistaken for silver and a mirage for water even though the appearance is false at all times (in the past, present and future), nobody can dispel this delusion.

(117)

चौ०—एहि बिधि जग हरि आश्रित रहई । जदपि असत्य देत दुख अहई ॥
जौं सपनें सिर काटै कोई । बिनु जागें न दूरि दुख होई ॥ १ ॥
जासु कृपाँ अस भ्रम मिटि जाई । गिरिजा सोइ कृपाल रघुराई ॥
आदि अंत कोउ जासु न पावा । मति अनुमानि निगम अस गावा ॥ २ ॥
बिनु पद चलइ सुनइ बिनु काना । कर बिनु करम करइ बिधि नाना ॥
आनन रहित सकल रस भोगी । बिनु बानी बकता बड़ जोगी ॥ ३ ॥
तन बिनु परस नयन बिनु देखा । ग्रहइ घ्रान बिनु बास असेषा ॥
असि सब भाँति अलौकिक करनी । महिमा जासु जाइ नहिं बरनी ॥ ४ ॥

"In a like manner is this world of matter superimposed on Hari. Though unreal, it gives us pain nonetheless, just as if a man's head is cut off in a dream, he is not rid of pain till he wakes. Girijā, He whose grace wipes out such delusion is none else than the benevolent Lord of Raghus. Nobody has been able to discover His beginning or end. Basing their conclusions on

speculation the Vedas have described Him in the following words. He walks without feet, hears without ears and performs actions of various kinds even without hands. He enjoys all tastes without a mouth (palate) and is a most clever speaker even though devoid of speech. He touches without a body (the tactile sense), sees without eyes and catches all odours even without a nose (the olifactory sense). His ways are thus supernatural in every respect and His glory is beyond description. (1—4)

दो०—जेहि इमि गावहिं बेद बुध जाहि धरहिं मुनि ध्यान।
सोइ दसरथ सुत भगत हित कोसलपति भगवान॥ ११८॥

"He who is thus extolled by the Vedas and men of wisdom and whom the sages love to contemplate is no other than the divine Rāma, son of Daśaratha, lord of Ayodhyā, the friend of His devotees. (118)

चौ०—कासीं मरत जंतु अवलोकी। जासु नाम बल करउँ बिसोकी॥
सोइ प्रभु मोर चराचर स्वामी। रघुबर सब उर अंतरजामी॥ १॥
बिबसहुँ जासु नाम नर कहहीं। जनम अनेक रचित अघ दहहीं॥
सादर सुमिरन जे नर करहीं। भव बारिधि गोपद इव तरहीं॥ २॥
राम सो परमातमा भवानी। तहँ भ्रम अति अबिहित तव बानी॥
अस संसय आनत उर माहीं। ग्यान बिराग सकल गुन जाहीं॥ ३॥
सुनि सिव के भ्रम भंजन बचना। मिटि गै सब कुतरक कै रचना॥
भइ रघुपति पद प्रीति प्रतीती। दारुन असंभावना बीती॥ ४॥

"When I behold any creature dying in the holy Kāśī (the modern Banaras), it is by the power of His Name that I rid it of all sorrow (liberate it). He is my lord, the Chief of Raghus, the sovereign of all creation, animate as well as inanimate, the witness of all hearts. If men repeat His Name even in a helpless state, sins committed by them in a series of previous existences are burnt away; while those who devoutly remember Him are able to cross the ocean of mundane existence as if it were a mere hollow made by the hoof of a cow. Rāma is no other than that supreme Spirit, Bhavānī; your assertion that He is subject to delusion is wholly unwarranted. The moment a man harbours such a doubt in his mind, his wisdom, dispassion and all other virtues bid adieu to him." When Pārvatī heard Śiva's illuminating words, the whole structure of her sophistry collapsed. Attachment and devotion to the feet of the Lord of Raghus sprang in her heart and her shocking incredulity disappeared. (1—4)

दो०—पुनि पुनि प्रभु पद कमल गहि जोरि पंकरुह पानि।
बोलीं गिरिजा बचन बर मनहुँ प्रेम रस सानि॥ ११९॥

Clasping the lotus feet of her lord again and again, and joining her lotus-like palms, Pārvatī spoke the following fine words, steeping them as it were in the nectar of love:— (119)

चौ०—ससि कर सम सुनि गिरा तुम्हारी । मिटा मोह सरदातप भारी ॥
तुम्ह कृपाल सबु संसउ हरेऊ । राम स्वरूप जानि मोहि परेऊ ॥ १ ॥
नाथ कृपाँ अब गयउ बिषादा । सुखी भयउँ प्रभु चरन प्रसादा ॥
अब मोहि आपनि किंकरि जानी । जदपि सहज जड़ नारि अयानी ॥ २ ॥
प्रथम जो मैं पूछा सोइ कहहू । जौं मो पर प्रसन्न प्रभु अहहू ॥
राम ब्रह्म चिनमय अबिनासी । सर्ब रहित सब उर पुर बासी ॥ ३ ॥
नाथ धरेउ नरतनु केहि हेतू । मोहि समुझाइ कहहु बृषकेतू ॥
उमा बचन सुनि परम बिनीता । रामकथा पर प्रीति पुनीता ॥ ४ ॥

"Now that I have listened to Your words, which were refreshing as moonbeams, my ignorance, like the feverish heat of the autumnal sunshine, has faded away. You have removed all my doubt, O gracious Lord, and the reality of Rāma has been revealed to me. By Your grace, my lord, my gloom has been lifted and I feel happy now by the blessing of my lord's feet. Now, regarding me as Your slave, even though I am a woman, ignorant and stupid by nature, answer my former question, if You are pleased with me, my lord. Rāma, I now understand, is no other than the indestructible Brahma (God), who is consciousness itself and who, though bereft of all, yet dwells in the heart of all. Why did He take the form of a human being ? Explain this to me, O Śankara." Hearing Umā's most polite words and seeing Her unadulterated love for the story of Śrī Rāma,— (1—4)

दो०—हियँ हरषे कामारि तब संकर सहज सुजान ।
बहु बिधि उमहि प्रसंसि पुनि बोले कृपानिधान ॥ १२० (क) ॥

—The all-merciful and all-wise Śankara, the Destroyer of Cupid, was glad at heart and, extolling Umā in so many ways, said:— (120 A)

[PAUSE 1 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

[PAUSE 4 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

सो०—सुनु सुभ कथा भवानि रामचरितमानस बिमल ।
कहा भुसुंडि बखानि सुना बिहग नायक गरुड़ ॥ १२० (ख) ॥
सो संबाद उदार जेहि बिधि भा आगें कहब ।
सुनहु राम अवतार चरित परम सुंदर अनघ ॥ १२० (ग) ॥
हरि गुन नाम अपार कथा रूप अगनित अमित ।
मैं निज मति अनुसार कहउँ उमा सादर सुनहु ॥ १२० (घ) ॥

"Hear the blessed story of the holy *Rāmacharitamanasa*, which was narrated at length by the sage Bhuśuṇḍi and heard by the king of birds, Garuḍa. I shall tell you later on how that great dialogue took place. First listen to the most charming and sanctifying story of His descent. The virtues, names, stories and forms of Śrī Hari are all unlimited, innumerable and immeasurable. Yet I proceed to tell them according to the best of my intellectual capacity; listen, Umā, with reverence. (120 B—D)

चौ०—सुनु गिरिजा हरिचरित सुहाए। बिपुल बिसद निगमागम गाए॥
हरि अवतार हेतु जेहि होई। इदमित्थं कहि जाइ न सोई॥ १॥
राम अतर्क्य बुद्धि मन बानी। मत हमार अस सुनहि सयानी॥
तदपि संत मुनि बेद पुराना। जस कछु कहहिं स्वमति अनुमाना॥ २॥
तस मैं सुमुखि सुनावउँ तोही। समुझि परइ जस कारन मोही॥
जब जब होइ धरम कै हानी। बाढ़हिं असुर अधम अभिमानी॥ ३॥
करहिं अनीति जाइ नहिं बरनी। सीदहिं बिप्र धेनु सुर धरनी॥
तब तब प्रभु धरि बिबिध सरीरा। हरहिं कृपानिधि सज्जन पीरा॥ ४॥

"Hark, O Girijā: the Vedas and the Tantras have sung numerous charming and sinless exploits of Śrī Hari. The cause of Śrī Hari's descent cannot be precisely stated. Listen, O sensible lady: Śrī Rāma is beyond the grasp of intellect, mind or speech: such is my conviction. Yet, O charming lady, I tell you the reason as I understand it and even as the saints and sages, the Vedas and the Purāṇas have stated according to their intellectual level. Whenever virtue declines and vile and haughty demons multiply and work uniquity that cannot be told, and whenever Brahmans, cows, gods and earth itself are in trouble, the gracious Lord assumes various (transcendent) forms and relieves the distress of the virtuous. (1–4)

दो०—असुर मारि थापहिं सुरन्ह राखहिं निज श्रुति सेतु।
जग बिस्तारहिं बिसद जस राम जन्म कर हेतु॥ १२१॥

"Killing the demons He reinstates the gods, preserves the bounds of propriety fixed by the Vedas, which represent His own breath, and diffuses His immaculate glory throughout the world. This is the motive of Śrī Rāma's descent. (121)

चौ०—सोइ जस गाइ भगत भव तरहीं। कृपासिंधु जन हित तनु धरहीं॥
राम जनम के हेतु अनेका। परम बिचित्र एक तें एका॥ १॥
जनम एक दुइ कहउँ बखानी। सावधान सुनु सुमति भवानी॥
द्वारपाल हरि के प्रिय दोऊ। जय अरु बिजय जान सब कोऊ॥ २॥
बिप्र श्राप तें दूनउ भाई। तामस असुर देह तिन्ह पाई॥
कनककसिपु अरु हाटकलोचन। जगत बिदित सुरपति मद मोचन॥ ३॥
बिजई समर बीर बिख्याता। धरि बराह बपु एक निपाता॥
होइ नरहरि दूसर पुनि मारा। जन प्रहलाद सुजस बिस्तारा॥ ४॥

"Singing this glory the devotees cross the ocean of mundane existence; it is for the sake of His devotees that the compassionate Lord bodies Himself forth. The motives of Śrī Rāma's birth are many, each more wonderful than the other. I will refer to one or two such births at some length; please listen attentively, O wise Bhavānī. Śrī Hari has two favourite gate-keepers, Jaya and Vijaya, who are known to everybody. Due to the curse of certain Brahmans (Sanaka and his three brothers) both these brothers were born in the accursed species of demons. One of them was known as Hiraṇyakaśipu

and the other as Hiraṇyākṣa. They became known throughout the universe as the tamers of the pride of Indra (the chief of gods). Both of them were celebrated heroes who came out victorious in battle. The Lord assumed the form of a Boar in order to kill one of the two brothers (viz., Hiraṇyākṣa); while bodying Himself forth as a Man-Lion, He killed the other (Hiraṇyakaśipu) and spread the fair renown of His devotee, Prahlāda (Hiraṇyakaśipu's son).

(1—4)

दो०—भए निसाचर जाइ तेइ महाबीर बलवान।
कुंभकरन रावन सुभट सुर बिजई जग जान॥ १२२॥

"It is these two brothers that were born again as the powerful and most valiant Rākṣasas, Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa, who were great warriors and, as all the world knows, conquered even gods.

(122)

चौ०—मुकुत न भए हते भगवाना। तीनि जनम द्विज बचन प्रवाना॥
एक बार तिन्ह के हित लागी। धरेउ सरीर भगत अनुरागी॥ १॥
कस्यप अदिति तहाँ पितु माता। दसरथ कौसल्या बिख्याता॥
एक कलप एहि बिधि अवतारा। चरित पवित्र किए संसारा॥ २॥
एक कलप सुर देखि दुखारे। समर जलंधर सन सब हारे॥
संभु कीन्ह संग्राम अपारा। दनुज महाबल मरइ न मारा॥ ३॥
परम सती असुराधिप नारी। तेहिं बल ताहि न जितहिं पुरारी॥ ४॥

"Even though slain by the Lord, the two brothers (Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu) did not attain liberation; for the Brahmans had doomed them to three births. It was on their account that the Lover of the devotees bodied Himself forth on one occasion. In that birth Kaśyapa and Aditi were His parents, who were known by the names of Daśaratha and Kausalyā respectively. This was how in one Kalpa (round of creation) the Lord descended from heaven and performed purifying deeds on earth. In another Kalpa all the gods were worsted in their conflict with the demon Jalandhara. Seeing their distress Śambhu waged war against him, which knew no end; but the demon, who possessed a great might, could not be killed in spite of His best efforts. The wife of the demon chief was a most virtuous lady. Armed by her strength of character the demon could not be conquered even by the Vanquisher of Tripura. (1—4)

दो०—छल करि टारेउ तासु ब्रत प्रभु सुर कारज कीन्ह।
जब तेहिं जानेउ मरम तब श्राप कोप करि दीन्ह॥ १२३॥

"By a stratagem the Lord broke her vow of chastity and accomplished the purpose of the gods. When the lady discovered the trick, she cursed Him in her wrath.

(123)

चौ०—तासु श्राप हरि दीन्ह प्रमाना। कौतुकनिधि कृपाल भगवाना॥
तहाँ जलंधर रावन भयऊ। रन हति राम परम पद दयऊ॥ १॥

एक जनम कर कारन एहा। जेहि लगि राम धरी नरदेहा ॥
प्रति अवतार कथा प्रभु केरी। सुनु मुनि बरनी कबिन्ह घनेरी ॥ २ ॥
नारद श्राप दीन्ह एक बारा। कलप एक तेहि लगि अवतारा ॥
गिरिजा चकित भईं सुनि बानी। नारद बिष्नुभगत पुनि ग्यानी ॥ ३ ॥
कारन कवन श्राप मुनि दीन्हा। का अपराध रमापति कीन्हा ॥
यह प्रसंग मोहि कहहु पुरारी। मुनि मन मोह आचरज भारी ॥ ४ ॥

"The sportive and gracious Lord accepted her curse. It was this Jalandhara who was reborn as Rāvaṇa in this latter Kalpa. Killing him in battle Śrī Rāma conferred on him the supreme state (final beatitude). This was the reason why Śrī Rāma assumed a human form in one particular birth. Hark, O Bharadwāja: the story of each birth of the Lord has been sung by poets in diverse ways. On one occasion Nārada cursed the Lord; this served as an excuse of His birth in one particular Kalpa." Girijā was taken aback to hear these words and said, "Nārada is a votary of God Viṣṇu and an enlightened soul too. Wherefore did the sage pronounce a curse? What offence had Lakṣmī's lord committed against him? Tell me the whole story, O Slayer of the demon Tripura. It is very strange that the sage should have fallen a prey to delusion." (1—4)

दो०—बोले बिहसि महेस तब ग्यानी मूढ़ न कोइ ।
जेहि जस रघुपति करहिं जब सो तस तेहि छन होइ ॥ १२४ (क) ॥

The great Lord Śiva then replied with a smile, "There is no one enlightened or deluded. Man instantly becomes what the Lord of Raghus wills him to be at a particular moment. (124 A)

सो०—कहउँ राम गुन गाथ भरद्वाज सादर सुनहु ।
भव भंजन रघुनाथ भजु तुलसी तजि मान मद ॥ १२४ (ख) ॥

Said Yājñavalkya, "I am going to recount the virtues of Rāma, O Bharadwāja; listen with a devout mind." Renouncing pride and intoxication, O Tulasīdāsa, adore the Lord of Raghus, who puts an end to metempsychosis. (124 B)

चौ०—हिमगिरि गुहा एक अति पावनि। बह समीप सुरसरी सुहावनि ॥
आश्रम परम पुनीत सुहावा। देखि देवरिषि मन अति भावा ॥ १ ॥
निरखि सैल सरि बिपिन बिभागा। भयउ रमापति पद अनुरागा ॥
सुमिरत हरिहि श्राप गति बाधी। सहज बिमल मन लागि समाधी ॥ २ ॥
मुनि गति देखि सुरेस डेराना। कामहि बोलि कीन्ह सनमाना ॥
सहित सहाय जाहु मम हेतू। चलेउ हरषि हियँ जलचरकेतू ॥ ३ ॥
सुनासीर मन महुँ असि त्रासा। चहत देवरिषि मम पुर बासा ॥
जे कामी लोलुप जग माहीं। कुटिल काक इव सबहि डेराहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"In the Himālaya mountains there was a most sacred cave; the beautiful heavenly stream (Gangā) flowed near by. The sight of this most holy and charming hermitage highly attracted the mind of the celestial sage Nārada. Seeing the mountain, the river and the forest glades, his heart developed

love for the feet of Lakṣmī's lord. The thought of Śrī Hari broke the spell of the curse* (pronounced by Dakṣa, which did not allow him to stay at one place); and his mind, which was naturally sinless, fell into a trance. Seeing the sage's condition, Indra (the chief of gods) became apprehensive. Summoning the god of love, he received him with great honour and said, "For my sake go with your associates !" The god of love (who has a fish emblazoned on his standard) set out gladdened at heart. Indra apprehended that the celestial sage sought to occupy his abode. Those who are lustful and grasping are afraid of everyone like the evil-minded crow. (1—4)

दो०—सूख हाड़ लै भाग सठ स्वान निरखि मृगराज ।
छीनि लेइ जनि जान जड़ तिमि सुरपतिहि न लाज ॥ १२५ ॥

Just as a foolish dog, on seeing a king of beasts, should run away with a dry bone, fearing in his crass ignorance lest the lion should rob him of it, Indra too in his shamelessness thought as above. (125)

चौ०—तेहि आश्रमहिं मदन जब गयऊ । निज मायाँ बसंत निरमयऊ ॥
कुसुमित बिबिध बिटप बहुरंगा । कूजहिं कोकिल गुंजहिं भृंगा ॥ १ ॥
चली सुहावनि त्रिबिध बयारी । काम कृसानु बढ़ावनिहारी ॥
रंभादिक सुरनारि नबीना । सकल असमसर कला प्रबीना ॥ २ ॥
करहिं गान बहु तान तरंगा । बहुबिधि क्रीड़हिं पानि पतंगा ॥
देखि सहाय मदन हरषाना । कीन्हेसि पुनि प्रपंच बिधि नाना ॥ ३ ॥
काम कला कछु मुनिहि न ब्यापी । निज भयँ डरेउ मनोभव पापी ॥
सीम कि चाँपि सकइ कोउ तासू । बड़ रखवार रमापति जासू ॥ ४ ॥

When the god of love reached that hermitage, he created a semblance of the vernal season by his illusory power. Many-coloured blossoms appeared on the trees of different kinds; cuckoos sang and bees hummed. Delightful breezes, cool, soft and fragrant, blew, fanning the flame of passion. Rambhā and other heavenly damsels, who looked ever young and were all past masters in amorous sports, sang in undulating tones of various kinds and sported in many ways, ball in hand. The god of love was delighted to see his associates there and employed a variety of deceptive tricks. But his amorous devices had no effect on the sage. Guilty Cupid was now apprehensive of his own destruction. Can anyone dare to trespass the bounds of him who has the Lord of Lakṣmī as his great protector. (1—4)

दो०—सहित सहाय सभीत अति मानि हारि मन मैन ।
गहेसि जाइ मुनि चरन तब कहि सुठि आरत बैन ॥ १२६ ॥

In dire dismay the god of love with his accomplices acknowledged his defeat and clasped the sage's feet, addressing him in accents of deep humility. (126)

चौ०—भयउ न नारद मन कछु रोषा । कहि प्रिय बचन काम परितोषा ॥
नाइ चरन सिरु आयसु पाई । गयउ मदन तब सहित सहाई ॥ १ ॥

* For the cause of the curse see *Chaupai* 1 following *Doha* 78 (p. 83).

मुनि सुसीलता आपनि करनी । सुरपति सभाँ जाइ सब बरनी ॥
सुनि सब कें मन अचरजु आवा । मुनिहि प्रसंसि हरिहि सिरु नावा ॥ २ ॥
तब नारद गवने सिव पाहीं । जिता काम अहमिति मन माहीं ॥
मार चरित संकरहि सुनाए । अतिप्रिय जानि महेस सिखाए ॥ ३ ॥
बार बार बिनवउँ मुनि तोही । जिमि यह कथा सुनायहु मोही ॥
तिमि जनि हरिहि सुनावहु कबहूँ । चलेहुँ प्रसंग दुराएहु तबहूँ ॥ ४ ॥

There was no anger in Nārada's mind; he reassured the god of love by addressing him in friendly terms. Then, bowing his head at the sage's feet and obtaining his leave, Love retired with his accomplices. Reaching the court of Indra (the chief of gods) he related his own doings, on the one hand, and the sage's clemency, on the other. Hearing the tale all were astonished; they extolled the sage and bowed their head to Hari. Then Nārada called on Śiva; he was proud of his victory over Love and told Him all Love's doings. Knowing him to be His most beloved friend, the great Lord Śiva admonished him as follows:—"O sage, I pray you again and again: never repeat this story to Hari as you have repeated it to me. Even if the topic ever comes up before Him, please hush it up." (1—4)

दो०—संभु दीन्ह उपदेस हित नहिं नारदहि सोहान ।
भरद्वाज कौतुक सुनहु हरि इच्छा बलवान ॥ १२७ ॥

Wholesome was the advice given by Śambhu; but it did not please Nārada. Bharadwāja, now hear what interesting thing happened. The will of Hari is predominant. (127)

चौ०—राम कीन्ह चाहहिं सोइ होई । करै अन्यथा अस नहिं कोई ॥
संभु बचन मुनि मन नहिं भाए । तब बिरंचि के लोक सिधाए ॥ १ ॥
एक बार करतल बर बीना । गावत हरि गुन गान प्रबीना ॥
छीरसिंधु गवने मुनिनाथा । जहँ बस श्रीनिवास श्रुतिमाथा ॥ २ ॥
हरषि मिले उठि रमानिकेता । बैठे आसन रिषिहि समेता ॥
बोले बिहसि चराचर राया । बहुते दिनन कीन्हि मुनि दाया ॥ ३ ॥
काम चरित नारद सब भाषे । जद्यपि प्रथम बरजि सिवँ राखे ॥
अति प्रचंड रघुपति कै माया । जेहि न मोह अस को जग जाया ॥ ४ ॥

The will of Śrī Rāma alone prevails; there is no one who can alter it. Śambhu's advice fell flat on the sage. Then he went to the abode of Brahmā (the Creator). Singing the glories of Śrī Hari, to the accompaniment of the excellent lute he had in his hand, the lord of sages, Nārada, who was skilled in music, once repaired to the ocean of milk, where dwells the abode of Lakṣmī, Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa, who is Vedānta (the crown of all Vedas) personified. The abode of Ramā (Lakṣmī) rose to meet him in great joy and shared His seat with the sage. The Lord of the entire creation, animate as well as inanimate, said with a smile, "It is after a long time that you have showed Me this favour, reverend sir." Nārada told Him all the doings of

Love, even though Śiva had already forbidden him to do so. Most formidable is the Māyā (deluding potency) of the Lord of Raghus. No one was ever born in this world, who is beyond its charm. (1—4)

दो०—रूख बदन करि बचन मृदु बोले श्रीभगवान ।
तुम्हरे सुमिरन तें मिटहिं मोह मार मद मान ॥ १२८ ॥

With an impassive look, yet in coaxing accents, said the Lord, "By your very thought self-delusion, lust, arrogance and pride disappear. (128)

चौ०—सुनु मुनि मोह होइ मन ताकें । ग्यान बिराग हृदय नहिं जाकें ॥
ब्रह्मचरज ब्रत रत मतिधीरा । तुम्हहि कि करइ मनोभव पीरा ॥ १ ॥
नारद कहेउ सहित अभिमाना । कृपा तुम्हारि सकल भगवाना ॥
करुनानिधि मन दीख बिचारी । उर अंकुरेउ गरब तरु भारी ॥ २ ॥
बेगि सो मैं डारिहउँ उखारी । पन हमार सेवक हितकारी ॥
मुनि कर हित मम कौतुक होई । अवसि उपाय करबि मैं सोई ॥ ३ ॥
तब नारद् हरि पद सिर नाई । चले हृदयँ अहमिति अधिकाई ॥
श्रीपति निज माया तब प्रेरी । सुनहु कठिन करनी तेहि केरी ॥ ४ ॥

"Hark, O sage! the mind of him alone is susceptible to delusion, whose heart is devoid of wisdom and dispassion. You are steadfast in your vow of celibacy and resolute of mind; you can never be smitten with pangs of Love." Nārada replied with a feeling of pride, "Lord, it is all due to Your grace." The compassionate Lord pondered and saw that a huge tree of pride had sprouted in his heart. "I shall soon tear it up by roots; for it is My vow to serve the best interests of My servants. I must contrive some plan which may do good to the sage and serve as a diversion for Me." Then, bowing his head at the feet of Śrī Hari, Nārada departed. The pride in his heart had swelled. The Lord of Lakṣmī (the goddess of prosperity) then set His Māyā into operation. Now hear of her relentless doings. (1—4)

दो०—बिरचेउ मग महुँ नगर तेहिं सत जोजन बिस्तार ।
श्रीनिवासपुर तें अधिक रचना बिबिध प्रकार ॥ १२९ ॥

The Lord's Māyā (deluding potency) created on the way a city with an area of eight hundred square miles. The manifold architectural beauties of that city excelled even those of Viṣṇu's own capital (Vaikuṇṭha). (129)

चौ०—बसहिं नगर सुंदर नर नारी । जनु बहु मनसिज रति तनुधारी ॥
तेहिं पुर बसइ सीलनिधि राजा । अगनित हय गय सेन समाजा ॥ १ ॥
सत सुरेस सम बिभव बिलासा । रूप तेज बल नीति निवासा ॥
बिस्वमोहनी तासु कुमारी । श्री बिमोह जिसु रूपु निहारी ॥ २ ॥
सोइ हरिमाया सब गुन खानी । सोभा तासु कि जाइ बखानी ॥
करइ स्वयंबर सो नृपबाला । आए तहँ अगनित महिपाला ॥ ३ ॥

मुनि कौतुकी नगर तेहिं गयऊ । पुरबासिन्ह सब पूछत भयऊ ॥
सुनि सब चरित भूपगृहँ आए । करि पूजा नृप मुनि बैठाए ॥ ४ ॥

It was inhabited by graceful men and women, whom you would take to be so many incarnations of the god of love and his wife Rati. A king, Śīlanidhi by name, ruled over that city; he owned numberless horses, elephants and troops. He possessed the grandeur and luxury of a hundred Indras, and was a repository of grace, splendour, might and wisdom. He had a daughter, Viśwamohinī by name, whose beauty enraptured even Lakṣmī. She was no other than Śrī Hari's own Māyā (enrapturing potency), the fountain-head of all virtues; who can describe her charm? The princess was going to marry by self-election; hence kings beyond number arrived there as suitors. The sportive sage (Nārada) entered the city and inquired everything from the people. Hearing all that had been going on there, he wended his way to the king's palace. The king paid him homage and gave him a seat. (1—4)

दो०—आनि देखाई नारदहि भूपति राजकुमारि ।
कहहु नाथ गुन दोष सब एहि के हृदयँ बिचारि ॥ १३० ॥

The king brought and showed the princess to Nārada and said, "Tell me after mature thought all that is good or bad about her." (130)

चौ०—देखि रूप मुनि बिरति बिसारी । बड़ी बार लगि रहे निहारी ॥
लच्छन तासु बिलोकि भुलाने । हृदयँ हरष नहिं प्रगट बखाने ॥ १ ॥
जो एहि बरइ अमर सोइ होई । समरभूमि तेहि जीत न कोई ॥
सेवहिं सकल चराचर ताही । बरइ सीलनिधि कन्या जाही ॥ २ ॥
लच्छन सब बिचारि उर राखे । कछुक बनाइ भूप सन भाषे ॥
सुता सुलच्छन कहि नृप पाहीं । नारद चले सोच मन माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
करौं जाइ सोइ जतन बिचारी । जेहि प्रकार मोहि बरै कुमारी ॥
जप तप कछु न होइ तेहि काला । हे बिधि मिलइ कवन बिधि बाला ॥ ४ ॥

Seeing her beauty the sage forgot all about his dispassion and remained gazing on her for a long time. When he read the auspicious marks on her body, he was lost in reverie. He was gladdened at heart, but he would not openly mention the happy characteristics. "He who weds this girl," he said to himself, "shall become immortal; and no one shall be able to conquer him in battle. He whom Śīlanidhi's daughter selects for her lord shall be adored by the entire creation, both animate and inanimate." Having read these characteristics the sage kept them to himself, and mentioned a few fabricated ones to the king. Telling the king that his daughter was of good promise, Nārada left. He thought within himself, "Let me devise and try some means whereby the princess may choose me for her husband." He had no more zeal to practise Japa (muttering of sacred formulas) or austerity. "Good God, how am I to get the girl?" he said to himself. (1—4)

दो०—एहि अवसर चाहिअ परम सोभा रूप बिसाल ।
जो बिलोकि रीझै कुअँरि तब मेलै जयमाल ॥ १३१ ॥

"What is needed on this occasion is great personal charm and surpassing beauty, whereby the princess may be enamoured of me and place the wreath of victory round my neck," he continued. (131)

चौ०—हरि सन मागौं सुंदरताई । होइहि जात गहरु अति भाई ॥
मोरें हित हरि सम नहिं कोऊ । एहि अवसर सहाय सोइ होऊ ॥ १ ॥
बहुबिधि बिनय कीन्हि तेहि काला । प्रगटेउ प्रभु कौतुकी कृपाला ॥
प्रभु बिलोकि मुनि नयन जुड़ाने । होइहि काजु हिएँ हरषाने ॥ २ ॥
अति आरति कहि कथा सुनाई । करहु कृपा करि होहु सहाई ॥
आपन रूप देहु प्रभु मोही । आन भाँति नहिं पावौं ओही ॥ ३ ॥
जेहि बिधि नाथ होइ हित मोरा । करहु सो बेगि दास मैं तोरा ॥
निज माया बल देखि बिसाला । हियँ हँसि बोले दीनदयाला ॥ ४ ॥

"Let me ask Hari for a gift of beauty. But, alas! much time will be lost in going to Him. Yet I have no such friend as Hari; let Him, therefore, come to my rescue at this juncture" Then Nārada prayed in manifold ways and lo! the sportive and merciful Lord appeared before him. The sight was soothing to the sage's eyes. He was glad at heart and felt assured that his object would be accomplished. In great humility he told the Lord all that had happened, and said, "Be gracious to me and be good enough to help me. Lord, bestow on me Your own beauty; in no other way can I get possession of her. Speedily do that which may serve my best interests; I am Your own servant, my lord." Seeing the mighty power of His Māyā, the Lord, who is compassionate to the poor, smiled to himself and said:— (1—4)

दो०—जेहि बिधि होइहि परम हित नारद सुनहु तुम्हार ।
सोइ हम करब न आन कछु बचन न मृषा हमार ॥ १३२ ॥

"Nārada, listen to Me; I shall do that alone which is good to you, and nothing else. My words can never be untrue. (132)

चौ०—कुपथ माग रुज ब्याकुल रोगी । बैद न देइ सुनहु मुनि जोगी ॥
एहि बिधि हित तुम्हार मैं ठयऊ । कहि अस अंतरहित प्रभु भयऊ ॥ १ ॥
माया बिबस भए मुनि मूढ़ा । समुझी नहिं हरि गिरा निगूढ़ा ॥
गवने तुरत तहाँ रिषिराई । जहाँ स्वयंबर भूमि बनाई ॥ २ ॥
निज निज आसन बैठे राजा । बहु बनाव करि सहित समाजा ॥
मुनि मन हरष रूप अति मोरें । मोहि तजि आनहि बरिहि न भोरें ॥ ३ ॥
मुनि हित कारन कृपानिधाना । दीन्ह कुरूप न जाइ बखाना ॥
सो चरित्र लखि काहुँ न पावा । नारद जानि सबहिं सिर नावा ॥ ४ ॥

"Hark, O contemplative ascetic! if a patient distracted by his malady asks for something which is harmful to him, the physician would not give it. In a like manner I have resolved on doing what is good to you." So saying, the Lord disappeared. Under the spell of His Māyā the sage was so mystified that he could not understand even such unambiguous words of Śrī Hari. The chief of seers hastened to the spot where the arena for the choice-marriage

had been prepared. Richly adorned, the royal suitors had occupied their respective seats, each with his retinue. The sage was glad at heart; for he thought within himself, "My beauty is so surpassing that the princess will never commit the error of choosing for her husband anyone else than me." In the sage's own interest the gracious Lord had made him hideous beyond description. But no one could mark the change that had taken place in him; everyone knew him to be Nārada and greeted him as such. (1—4)

दो०—रहे तहाँ दुइ रुद्र गन ते जानहिं सब भेउ।
बिप्रबेष देखत फिरहिं परम कौतुकी तेउ ॥ १३३ ॥

Two of Śiva's attendants too happened to be there. They knew the whole secret and, disguised as Brahmans, went about seeing the fun. (133)

चौ०—जेहिं समाज बैठे मुनि जाई। हृदयँ रूप अहमिति अधिकाई ॥
तहँ बैठे महेस गन दोऊ। बिप्रबेष गति लखइ न कोऊ ॥ १ ॥
करहिं कूटि नारदहि सुनाई। नीकि दीन्हि हरि सुंदरताई ॥
रीझिहि राजकुअँरि छबि देखी। इन्हहि बरिहि हरि जानि बिसेषी ॥ २ ॥
मुनिहि मोह मन हाथ पराएँ। हँसहिं संभु गन अति सचु पाएँ ॥
जदपि सुनहिं मुनि अटपटि बानी। समुझि न परइ बुद्धि भ्रम सानी ॥ ३ ॥
काहुँ न लखा सो चरित बिसेषा। सो सरूप नृपकन्याँ देखा ॥
मर्कट बदन भयंकर देही। देखत हृदयँ क्रोध भा तेही ॥ ४ ॥

In the row where sat Nārada, exceedingly proud of his beauty, the two attendants of Maheśa too seated themselves. Being disguised as Brahmans they could not be detected. They flung sarcastic remarks at Nārada, saying, "Hari has given this man such excellent beauty that the princess will be enamoured to look at it and shall certainly choose him, taking him for Hari* Himself." The sage was under a spell of delusion; for his heart had been stolen by love. The attendants of Śiva felt amused at this and greatly enjoyed the fun. Even though the sage heard their ironical talk, he could not follow it, his reason being clouded by infatuation. No one perceived this extraordinary phenomenon; the princess alone saw his ugly form. The moment she beheld his monkey-like face and frightful form she was filled with rage. (1—4)

दो०—सखीं संग लै कुअँरि तब चलि जनु राजमराल।
देखत फिरइ महीप सब कर सरोज जयमाल ॥ १३४ ॥

Accompanied by her girl companions the princess then glided as a swan. With a wreath of victory in her lotus hands she moved about surveying each of her royal suitors. (134)

चौ०—जेहि दिसि बैठे नारद फूली। सो दिसि तेहिं न बिलोकी भूली ॥
पुनि पुनि मुनि उकसहिं अकुलाहीं। देखि दसा हर गन मुसुकाहीं ॥ १ ॥

---

* The word 'Hari' also means a monkey: the attendants of Śiva, therefore, indirectly hinted that the sage looked like a monkey.

धरि नृपतनु तहँ गयउ कृपाला । कुअँरि हरषि मेलेउ जयमाला ॥
दुलहिनि लै गे लच्छिनिवासा । नृपसमाज सब भयउ निरासा ॥ २ ॥
मुनि अति बिकल मोहँ मति नाठी । मनि गिरि गई छूटि जनु गाँठी ॥
तब हर गन बोले मुसुकाई । निज मुख मुकुर बिलोकहु जाई ॥ ३ ॥
अस कहि दोउ भागे भयँ भारी । बदन दीख मुनि बारि निहारी ॥
बेषु बिलोकि क्रोध अति बाढ़ा । तिन्हहि सराप दीन्ह अति गाढ़ा ॥ ४ ॥

She did not care to look even casually at the quarter in which Nārada sat elated with pride. Again and again the sage would raise himself and fidget about; the attendants of Hara smiled to see him in that state. The gracious Lord too went there in the form of a king; the princess joyfully placed the wreath of victory round His neck. The Lord of Lakṣmī carried off the bride to the despair of all assembled kings. The sage felt much perturbed; for infatuation had robbed the sage of his reason. He felt as if a gem had dropped from a loosened knot in the end of his garment. The attendants of Hara then smilingly said, "Just look at your face in a mirror." Uttering these words both ran away in great alarm and the sage looked at his reflection in water. His fury knew no bounds when he beheld his form; and he pronounced a terrible curse on the attendants of Śiva:— (1—4)

दो०—होहु निसाचर जाइ तुम्ह कपटी पापी दोउ ।
हँसेहु हमहि सो लेहु फल बहुरि हँसेहु मुनि कोउ ॥ १३५ ॥

"O you sinful imposters, go and be reborn as demons. You mocked me; therefore, reap its reward. Mock again a sage, if you dare." (135)

चौ०—पुनि जल दीख रूप निज पावा । तदपि हृदयँ संतोष न आवा ॥
फरकत अधर कोप मन माहीं । सपदि चले कमलापति पाहीं ॥ १ ॥
देहउँ श्राप कि मरिहउँ जाई । जगत मोरि उपहास कराई ॥
बीचहिं पंथ मिले दनुजारी । संग रमा सोइ राजकुमारी ॥ २ ॥
बोले मधुर बचन सुरसाईं । मुनि कहँ चले बिकल की नाईं ॥
सुनत बचन उपजा अति क्रोधा । माया बस न रहा मन बोधा ॥ ३ ॥
पर संपदा सकहु नहिं देखी । तुम्हरें इरिषा कपट बिसेषी ॥
मथत सिंधु रुद्रहि बौरायहु । सुरन्ह प्रेरि बिष पान करायहु ॥ ४ ॥

Looking again in water, he saw that he had regained his real form; yet his heart found no solace. His lips quivered and there was indignation in his heart. At once he proceeded to where the Lord of Lakṣmī was. "I shall either curse Him or die at His door," he said to himself, "seeing that He has made me a butt of ridicule throughout the world." The terror of the demons, Śrī Hari, met him right on the way. He was accompanied by Goddess Ramā and the princess referred to above. The lord of immortals spoke in gentle tones, "To what destination, holy sir, are you betaking yourself like one distracted?" As soon as he heard these words Nārada was filled with rage. Dominated as he was by Māyā, there was no reason left in him. He said, "You cannot bear to look upon the good fortune of others. You are richly endowed with jealousy

and fraud. While churning the ocean You drove Rudra mad and inciting Him through the gods You made Him quaff the poison. (1–4)

दो०—असुर सुरा बिष संकरहि आपु रमा मनि चारु ।
स्वारथ साधक कुटिल तुम्ह सदा कपट ब्यवहारु ॥ १३६ ॥

"Apportioning intoxicating liquor to the demons and poison to Śankara, You appropriated Rama and the lovely gem (Kaustubha) to Yourself. You have ever been selfish and perverse, and treacherous in Your dealings. (136)

चौ०—परम स्वतंत्र न सिर पर कोई । भावइ मनहि करहु तुम्ह सोई ॥
भलेहि मंद मंदेहि भल करहू । बिसमय हरष न हियँ कछु धरहू ॥ १ ॥
डहकि डहकि परिचेहु सब काहू । अति असंक मन सदा उछाहू ॥
करम सुभासुभ तुम्हहि न बाधा । अब लगि तुम्हहि न काहूँ साधा ॥ २ ॥
भले भवन अब बायन दीन्हा । पावहुगे फल आपन कीन्हा ॥
बंचेहु मोहि जवनि धरि देहा । सोइ तनु धरहु श्राप मम एहा ॥ ३ ॥
कपि आकृति तुम्ह कीन्हि हमारी । करिहहिं कीस सहाय तुम्हारी ॥
मम अपकार कीन्ह तुम्ह भारी । नारि बिरहँ तुम्ह होब दुखारी ॥ ४ ॥

"You are absolutely independent and subordinate to none; therefore You do whatever pleases Your mind. You debase a good soul and redeem a vile person and neither rejoice nor grieve over it. Deceiving everyone You have become habituated to such tricks. You entertain no fear and are always zealous in pursuing Your object. Good and evil deeds do not come in Your way; no one has so far been able to correct You You have this time played with fire and shall reap what You have sown. Take that very form in which You have imposed upon me: this is my curse. You made me look like a monkey; therefore You shall have monkeys for Your helpmates. And as You have grievously wronged me, so shall You suffer the pangs of separation from Your wife" (1–4)

दो०—श्राप सीस धरि हरषि हियँ प्रभु बहु बिनती कीन्हि ।
निज माया कै प्रबलता करषि कृपानिधि लीन्हि ॥ १३७ ॥

Gladly accepting the curse, the compassionate Lord made many entreaties to the sage, and withdrew the irresistible charm of His Māyā. (137)

चौ०—जब हरि माया दूरि निवारी । नहिं तहँ रमा न राजकुमारी ॥
तब मुनि अति सभीत हरि चरना । गहे पाहि प्रनतारति हरना ॥ १ ॥
मृषा होउ मम श्राप कृपाला । मम इच्छा कह दीनदयाला ॥
मैं दुर्बचन कहे बहुतेरे । कह मुनि पाप मिटिहिं किमि मेरे ॥ २ ॥
जपहु जाइ संकर सत नामा । होइहि हृदयँ तुरत बिश्रामा ॥
कोउ नहिं सिव समान प्रिय मोरें । असि परतीति तजहु जनि भोरें ॥ ३ ॥
जेहि पर कृपा न करहिं पुरारी । सो न पाव मुनि भगति हमारी ॥
अस उर धरि महि बिचरहु जाई । अब न तुम्हहि माया निअराई ॥ ४ ॥

When Śrī Hari lifted the spell of His Māyā, there was neither Rama nor the princess to be seen by His side. In dire dismay the sage then clasped the feet of Hari and said, "O Reliever of the distress of the suppliant, save me! O gracious lord! let my curse prove ineffectual." "It was My will," replied the Lord, who is so merciful to the humble. "I poured many abuses at You," the sage repeated, "how shall my sins be expiated?" "Go and repeat the names of Śankara a hundred times; your heart will be disburdened at once. No one is so dear to Me as Śiva: never give up this belief even by mistake. O sage, he who does not earn the good-will of Śiva shall never attain true devotion to Me. Bearing this in mind, go and perambulate the globe. My Māyā shall haunt you no more."

(1—4)

दो०—बहु बिधि मुनिहि प्रबोधि प्रभु तब भए अंतरधान ।
सत्यलोक नारद चले करत राम गुन गान ॥ १३८ ॥

Having thus reassured the sage, the Lord then disappeared; while Nārada proceeded to Satyaloka (the seventh paradise, the abode of Brahmā) chanting Śrī Rāma's praises as he went.

(138)

चौ०—हर गन मुनिहि जात पथ देखी । बिगतमोह मन हरष बिसेषी ॥
अति सभीत नारद पहिं आए । गहि पद आरत बचन सुनाए ॥ १ ॥
हर गन हम न बिप्र मुनिराया । बड़ अपराध कीन्ह फल पाया ॥
श्राप अनुग्रह करहु कृपाला । बोले नारद दीनदयाला ॥ २ ॥
निसिचर जाइ होहु तुम्ह दोऊ । बैभव बिपुल तेज बल होऊ ॥
भुजबल बिस्व जितब तुम्ह जहिआ । धरिहहिं बिष्नु मनुज तनु तहिआ ॥ ३ ॥
समर मरन हरि हाथ तुम्हारा । होइहहु मुकुत न पुनि संसारा ॥
चले जुगल मुनि पद सिर नाई । भए निसाचर कालहि पाई ॥ ४ ॥

When the attendants of Śiva saw the sage moving along the road free from delusion and greatly delighted at heart, they approached him in great alarm and, clasping his feet, spoke to him in great humility, "We are servants of Śiva and no Brahmans, O great sage; we committed a great sin and have reaped its fruit. Now rid us of the curse, O benevolent sage." Nārada, who was full of compassion to the humble, replied, "Both of you go and take the form of demons. You shall possess an enormous fortune, grandeur and strength. When you have subdued the universe by the might of your arm, God Viṣṇu shall take a human form. Dying at His hands in battle, you shall be liberated and shall never be reborn." Bowing their head at the sage's feet, both departed and were reborn as demons in due course.

(1—4)

दो०—एक कलप एहि हेतु प्रभु लीन्ह मनुज अवतार ।
सुर रंजन सज्जन सुखद हरि भंजन भुबि भार ॥ १३९ ॥

In one Kalpa (round of creation) it was for this reason that Lord Śrī Hari assumed a human form. It is His vow to gladden the gods, to delight the virtuous and to ease the earth of its burden.

(139)

चौ०—एहि बिधि जनम करम हरि केरे। सुंदर सुखद बिचित्र घनेरे॥
कलप कलप प्रति प्रभु अवतरहीं। चारु चरित नानाबिधि करहीं॥ १॥
तब तब कथा मुनीसन्ह गाई। परम पुनीत प्रबंध बनाई॥
बिबिध प्रसंग अनूप बखाने। करहिं न सुनि आचरजु सयाने॥ २॥
हरि अनंत हरिकथा अनंता। कहहिं सुनहिं बहु बिधि सब संता॥
रामचंद्र के चरित सुहाए। कलप कोटि लगि जाहिं न गाए॥ ३॥
यह प्रसंग मैं कहा भवानी। हरिमायाँ मोहहिं मुनि ग्यानी॥
प्रभु कौतुकी प्रनत हितकारी। सेवत सुलभ सकल दुख हारी॥ ४॥

Thus Śrī Hari's births and exploits are many; they are all charming, delightful and marvellous. In every cycle of creation the Lord manifests Himself and enacts lovely sports of various kinds; and the great sages have on each such occasion sung His story in most sacred strains, relating wonderful anecdotes of diverse kinds, hearing which the wise marvel not. Infinite is Śrī Hari and infinite are His stories; each saint sings and hears them in divergent ways. The lovely sports of Rāmachandra cannot be sung even in crores of Kalpas. This episode, O Bhavānī, has been narrated by me in order to show that even enlightened sages are deluded by Śrī Hari's Māyā. The Lord is sportive and a friend of the suppliant; He is easy to serve and rids one of all sorrows. (1—4)

सो०—सुर नर मुनि कोउ नाहिं जेहि न मोह माया प्रबल।
अस बिचारि मन माहिं भजिअ महामाया पतिहि॥ १४०॥

There is no god, man or sage whom Śrī Hari's powerful Māyā cannot infatuate. Bearing this in mind, one should adore the Lord of this great Māyā. (140)

चौ०—अपर हेतु सुनु सैलकुमारी। कहउँ बिचित्र कथा बिस्तारी॥
जेहि कारन अज अगुन अरूपा। ब्रह्म भयउ कोसलपुर भूपा॥ १॥
जो प्रभु बिपिन फिरत तुम्ह देखा। बंधु समेत धरें मुनिबेषा॥
जासु चरित अवलोकि भवानी। सती सरीर रहिहु बौरानी॥ २॥
अजहुँ न छाया मिटति तुम्हारी। तासु चरित सुनु भ्रम रुज हारी॥
लीला कीन्हि जो तेहिं अवतारा। सो सब कहिहउँ मति अनुसारा॥ ३॥
भरद्वाज सुनि संकर बानी। सकुचि सप्रेम उमा मुसुकानी॥
लगे बहुरि बरनै बृषकेतू। सो अवतार भयउ जेहि हेतू॥ ४॥

Hear, O daughter of the mountain-king, another reason why the unbegotten, unqualified and formless Brahma became king of Ayodhyā. I shall relate at length the marvellous story connected with it. The Lord whom you saw roaming in the forest with His brother (Lakṣmaṇa) in the garb of hermits, and whose doings drove you mad in the form of Satī to such an extent that the shadow of that madness haunts you even to this day,—hear His exploits, which serve as a cure for the disease of delusion. The sportive deeds that were performed by the Lord in that birth, I shall relate them all to the best of My talents. Hearing Śankara's words, O Bharadwāja, Umā blushed and smiled with love. Śiva (who has a bull emblazoned on His standard) then began to relate the cause of the Lord's descent on that particular occasion. (1—4)

दो०—सो मैं तुम्ह सन कहउँ सबु सुनु मुनीस मन लाइ ।
राम कथा कलि मल हरनि मंगल करनि सुहाइ ॥ १४१ ॥

I proceed to tell you all about it, O Bharadwaja; listen attentively. The story of Sri Rama wipes out all the impurities of the Kali age, brings forth all blessings and is most charming. (141)

चौ०—स्वायंभू मनु अरु सतरूपा । जिन्ह तें भै नरसृष्टि अनूपा ॥
दंपति धरम आचरन नीका । अजहुँ गाव श्रुति जिन्ह कै लीका ॥ १ ॥
नृप उत्तानपाद सुत तासू । ध्रुव हरिभगत भयउ सुत जासू ॥
लघु सुत नाम प्रियब्रत ताही । बेद पुरान प्रसंसहिं जाही ॥ २ ॥
देवहूति पुनि तासु कुमारी । जो मुनि कर्दम कै प्रिय नारी ॥
आदिदेव प्रभु दीनदयाला । जठर धरेउ जेहिं कपिल कृपाला ॥ ३ ॥
सांख्य सास्त्र जिन्ह प्रगट बखाना । तत्त्व बिचार निपुन भगवाना ॥
तेहिं मनु राज कीन्ह बहु काला । प्रभु आयसु सब बिधि प्रतिपाला ॥ ४ ॥

Swayambhuva* Manu had Satarupa as wife; of them was born this human race, peerless in God's creation. The piety and conduct of the pair were excellent; the standard of morality set up by them is sung by the Vedas even to this day. Their son was King Uttanapada, who begot the celebrated devotee of Srī Hari, Dhruva. Manu's younger son was known as Priyavrata, who is mentioned with praise by the Vedas and the Purāṇas. They had a daughter too, Devahuti by name, who was the favourite consort of the sage Kardama, and who bore in her womb the all-powerful and benevolent Lord Kapila, the primal divinity, who is compassionate to the humble and who openly expounded the philosophy of Sankhya, an adept as He was in the enquiry after the ultimate principles. The said Manu ruled for a long period and followed the Lord's commandments (in the form of the scriptural ordinance) in every way. (1—4)

सो०—होइ न बिषय बिराग भवन बसत भा चौथपन ।
हृदयँ बहुत दुख लाग जनम गयउ हरिभगति बिनु ॥ १४२ ॥

"I have reached the fourth stage of my life (old age) while I am still living under the roof of my house (as a householder); but I have not yet lost my relish for the pleasures of sense," he said to himself. He felt sore distressed at heart that his life had been wasted without devotion to Srī Hari. (142)

चौ०—बरबस राज सुतहि तब दीन्हा । नारि समेत गवन बन कीन्हा ॥
तीरथ बर नैमिष बिख्याता । अति पुनीत साधक सिधि दाता ॥ १ ॥

* So-called because he was born of Swayambhu (the self-born Brahma). It is stated in the Puraṇas that the Creator divided himself into two halves, one of which was a male and the other a female. The former was known by the name of Swayambhuva and the other as Satarupa. He was the first of the fourteen Manus who rule over God's creation in succession, each holding office for 71½ Chaturyugas or repetitions of the four Yugas.

बसहिँ तहाँ मुनि सिद्ध समाजा । तहँ हियँ हरषि चलेउ मनु राजा ॥
पंथ जात सोहहिं मतिधीरा । ग्यान भगति जनु धरें सरीरा ॥ २ ॥
पहुँचे जाइ धेनुमति तीरा । हरषि नहाने निरमल नीरा ॥
आए मिलन सिद्ध मुनि ग्यानी । धरम धुरंधर नृपरिषि जानी ॥ ३ ॥
जहँ जहँ तीरथ रहे सुहाए । मुनिन्ह सकल सादर करवाए ॥
कृस सरीर मुनिपट परिधाना । सत समाज नित सुनहिं पुराना ॥ ४ ॥

Manu then perforce resigned the throne to his son and departed for the forest with his wife. Pre-eminent of all holy places is the celebrated Naimisaranya (the modern Nimsar in Oudh), which is most sacred and bestows success on those striving for realization. Multitudes of sages and adepts lived there. Glad of heart, King Manu proceeded to that place. Passing along the road, the king and queen of resolute mind looked like incarnations of spiritual wisdom and devotion respectively. On reaching the bank of the Gomatī they bathed with delight in the limpid stream. Adepts and enlightened sages came to see him, recognizing in the royal sage a champion of virtue. The sages reverently took them to all holy and lovely spots that were scattered here and there. With emaciated bodies and clad in hermits' robes they daily listened to the Puranas in the assembly of saints.

(1—4)

दो०--द्वादस अच्छर मंत्र पुनि जपहिं सहित अनुराग ।
बासुदेव पद पंकरुह दंपति मन अति लाग ॥ १४३ ॥

They further devoutly repeated the twelve-lettered formula (ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय). Their mind was fondly devoted to the lotus feet of Lord Vāsudeva (the all-pervading Viṣṇu). (143)

चौ०—करहिं अहार साक फल कंदा । सुमिरहिं ब्रह्म सच्चिदानंदा ॥
पुनि हरि हेतु करन तप लागे । बारि अधार मूल फल त्यागे ॥ १ ॥
उर अभिलाष निरंतर होई । देखिअ नयन परम प्रभु सोई ॥
अगुन अखंड अनंत अनादी । जेहि चिंतहिं परमारथबादी ॥ २ ॥
नेति नेति जेहि बेद निरूपा । निजानंद निरुपाधि अनूपा ॥
संभु बिरंचि बिष्नु भगवाना । उपजहिं जासु अंस तें नाना ॥ ३ ॥
ऐसेउ प्रभु सेवक बस अहई । भगत हेतु लीलातनु गहई ॥
जौं यह बचन सत्य श्रुति भाषा । तौ हमार पूजिहि अभिलाषा ॥ ४ ॥

They lived on vegetables, fruits and roots and meditated on Brahma (the Absolute), who is truth, consciousness and bliss combined. Again, they started undergoing penance for the sake of Śrī Hari, giving up roots and fruits for water alone. Their heart ever clamoured, "Let us see with our eyes that supreme Lord who is without attributes, without parts and without beginning or end, who is contemplated upon by the exponents of the highest reality, whom the Vedas describe in negative terms such as 'Not this, not this', who is bliss itself, unconditioned and without comparison, and from a particle of whose being emanate a number of Śambhus, Virañchis and Viṣṇus." Even such a Lord is

subordinate to the will of His devotees and assumes for their sake a form suitable for sport. If the above utterance of the Vedas is true, our desire will be surely accomplished. (1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि बीते बरष षट सहस बारि आहार ।
संबत सप्त सहस्र पुनि रहे समीर अधार ॥ १४४ ॥

In this way six thousand years elapsed even while they lived on water. Then for another seven millennia they lived on air alone. (144)

चौ०—बरष सहस दस त्यागेउ सोऊ । ठाढ़े रहे एक पद दोऊ ॥
बिधि हरि हर तप देखि अपारा । मनु समीप आए बहु बारा ॥ १ ॥
मागहु बर बहु भाँति लोभाए । परम धीर नहिं चलहिं चलाए ॥
अस्थिमात्र होइ रहे सरीरा । तदपि मनाग मनहिं नहिं पीरा ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु सर्बग्य दास निज जानी । गति अनन्य तापस नृप रानी ॥
मागु मागु बरु भै नभ बानी । परम गभीर कृपामृत सानी ॥ ३ ॥
मृतक जिआवनि गिरा सुहाई । श्रवन रंध्र होइ उर जब आई ॥
हृष्टपुष्ट तन भए सुहाए । मानहुँ अबहिं भवन ते आए ॥ ४ ॥

For ten thousand years they refused to inhale even air (*i.e.*, held their breath) and remained standing on one leg. Beholding their great penance Brahmā, Hari and Hara repeatedly called on Manu and tempted him in many ways, saying "Ask for a boon." But the king and queen were most resolute and did not swerve in spite of the deities' efforts to deflect them from their course. Although their frame had been reduced to a mere skeleton, there was not the least anguish in their heart. The omniscient Lord now recognized the king and queen as His own servants. The ascetic couple solely depended on Him. In the meantime a most deep voice thundered from heaven, "Ask, ask for a boon." The voice was steeped in the nectar of compassion and was so charming that it infused life into the dead. Entering through the cavity of the ears when it reached their very heart, they found their body attractive, animated and robust as before, as if they had just returned from home. (1—4)

दो०—श्रवन सुधा सम बचन सुनि पुलक प्रफुल्लित गात ।
बोले मनु करि दंडवत प्रेम न हृदयँ समात ॥ १४५ ॥

As the royal couple heard these words, which were delightful to the ear as nectar itself, the hair on their body bristled and a thrill ran through their limbs. Then falling prostrate on the ground and with his heart overflowing with love, Manu spoke:— (145)

चौ०—सुनु सेवक सुरतरु सुरधेनू । बिधि हरि हर बंदित पद रेनू ॥
सेवत सुलभ सकल सुख दायक । प्रनतपाल सचराचर नायक ॥ १ ॥
जौं अनाथ हित हम पर नेहू । तौ प्रसन्न होइ यह बर देहू ॥
जो सरूप बस सिव मन माहीं । जेहि कारन मुनि जतन कराहीं ॥ २ ॥

जो भुसुंडि मन मानस हंसा । सगुन अगुन जेहि निगम प्रसंसा ॥
देखहिं हम सो रूप भरि लोचन । कृपा करहु प्रनतारति मोचन ॥ ३ ॥
दंपति बचन परम प्रिय लागे । मृदुल बिनीत प्रेम रस पागे ॥
भगत बछल प्रभु कृपानिधाना । बिस्वबास प्रगटे भगवाना ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, O Lord ! You are a wish yielding tree and a cow of plenty to Your servants. The dust below Your feet is adored by Brahmā, Hari and Hara. You are easy to serve and a fountain of all blessings. You are the protector of the suppliant and the lord of all creation, both animate and inanimate. O friend of the forlorn, if You have any affection for us, be pleased to grant this boon to us. The form which dwells in Śiva's heart and is sought by sages, which sports like a swan in the lake of Bhuśuṇḍi's mind and is glorified by the Vedas as both with and without attributes,—be gracious to us and let us feast our eyes on that form; O Reliever of the distress of the suppliant." The soft and humble words of the royal couple, steeped as they were in the nectar of love, were liked by the Lord very much. Full of affection for His devotees and a storehouse of compassion, the all-powerful Lord, who pervades the whole universe, manifested Himself. (1—4)

दो०—नील सरोरुह नील मनि नील नीरधर स्याम ।
लाजहिं तन सोभा निरखि कोटि कोटि सत काम ॥ १४६ ॥

Billions and millions of Loves blushed to behold the elegance of His swarthy form, which resembled a blue lotus (in the softness of its touch), a sapphire (in its gloss) and a dark cloud (in its freshness). (146)

चौ०—सरद मयंक बदन छबि सींवा । चारु कपोल चिबुक दर ग्रीवा ॥
अधर अरुन रद सुंदर नासा । बिधु कर निकर बिनिंदक हासा ॥ १ ॥
नव अंबुज अंबक छबि नीकी । चितवनि ललित भावँती जी की ॥
भृकुटि मनोज चाप छबि हारी । तिलक ललाट पटल दुतिकारी ॥ २ ॥
कुंडल मकर मुकुट सिर भ्राजा । कुटिल केस जनु मधुप समाजा ॥
उर श्रीबत्स रुचिर बनमाला । पदिक हार भूषन मनिजाला ॥ ३ ॥
केहरि कंधर चारु जनेऊ । बाहु बिभूषन सुंदर तेऊ ॥
करि कर सरिस सुभग भुजदंडा । कटि निषंग कर सर कोदंडा ॥ ४ ॥

His countenance, which resembled the autumnal full moon, was the very perfection of beauty. Lovely were His cheeks and chin and His neck resembled the conch-shell in its spiral shape. His ruddy lips, teeth and nose were charming. His smile put to shame the rays of the moon. His eyes possessed the exquisite beauty of fresh-blown lotuses and His lovely glance captivated the heart. His eyebrows stole the beauty of Love's bow and a sectarian mark shone on His forehead. Fish-shaped ear-rings hung from his ear-lobes and a crown adorned His head. His curly locks looked like a swarm of bees. His breast was marked by a curl of hair and adorned with a beautiful wreath of sylvan flowers, a string of precious stones and other jewelled ornaments. His strong and well-built neck resembled that of a lion and the lovely sacred

thread was suspended from it. His long beautiful arms resembled the trunk of an elephant. The ornaments adorning them were also charming. A quiver was tied to His waist and His hands bore an arrow and a bow. (1—4)

दो०—तड़ित बिनिंदक पीत पट उदर रेख बर तीनि।
नाभि मनोहर लेति जनु जमुन भवँर छबि छीनि ॥ १४७ ॥

His yellow robes put to shame streaks of lightning and His belly had three folds; while His attractive navel robbed, as it were, the eddies on the Yamunā of their beauty. (147)

चौ०—पद राजीव बरनि नहिं जाहीं। मुनि मन मधुप बसहिं जेन्ह माहीं ॥
बाम भाग सोभति अनुकूला। आदिसक्ति छबिनिधि जगमूला ॥ १ ॥
जासु अंस उपजहिं गुनखानी। अगनित लच्छि उमा ब्रह्मानी ॥
भृकुटि बिलास जासु जग होई। राम बाम दिसि सीता सोई ॥ २ ॥
छबिसमुद्र हरि रूप बिलोकी। एकटक रहे नयन पट रोकी ॥
चितवहिं सादर रूप अनूपा। तृप्ति न मानहिं मनु सतरूपा ॥ ३ ॥
हरष बिबस तन दसा भुलानी। परे दंड इव गहि पद पानी ॥
सिर परसे प्रभु निज कर कंजा। तुरत उठाए करुनापुंजा ॥ ४ ॥

His lotus feet, which attract the minds of sages like so many bees, were beyond description. On His left side shone His primordial energy, Sītā, who is ever devoted to Him, and who is a storehouse of beauty and the source of the universe. Sīta, who stood to the left of Srī Rama, was the same from a fragment of whose being emanate countless Lakṣmīs, Umās amd Brahmāṇīs (Saraswatīs), all mines of virtues, and the mere play of whose eyebrows brings the cosmos into existence. On the form of Śrī Hari, the ocean of beauty, Manu and Śatarūpā gazed intently with unblinking eyes. That incomparable beauty they looked on with reverence and would not feel sated with it. Overcome with joy they lost consciousness of their body and fell flat on the ground, clasping His feet with their hands. The gracious Lord touched their heads with His own lotus hands and lifted them up at once. (1—4)

दो०—बोले कृपानिधान पुनि अति प्रसन्न मोहि जानि।
मागहु बर जोइ भाव मन महादानि अनुमानि ॥ १४८ ॥

The compassionate Lord then said, "Knowing that I am highly pleased with you and recognizing Me as a great donor, ask whatever boon you will." (148)

चौ०—सुनि प्रभु बचन जोरि जुग पानी। धरि धीरजु बोले मृदु बानी ॥
नाथ देखि पद कमल तुम्हारे। अब पूरे सब काम हमारे ॥ १ ॥
एक लालसा बड़ि उर माहीं। सुगम अगम कहि जाति सो नाहीं ॥
तुम्हहि देत अति सुगम गोसाईं। अगम लाग मोहि निज कृपनाईं ॥ २ ॥

जथा दरिद्र बिबुधतरु पाई। बहु संपति मागत सकुचाई॥
तासु प्रभाउ जान नहिं सोई। तथा हृदयँ मम संसय होई॥ ३॥
सो तुम्ह जानहु अंतरजामी। पुरवहु मोर मनोरथ स्वामी॥
सकुच बिहाइ मागु नृप मोही। मोरें नहिं अदेय कछु तोही॥ ४॥

On hearing the words of the Lord, Manu joined his palms and summoning courage spoke in soft accents, "Now that we have seen Your lotus feet, all our desires have been fulfilled. Yet one ardent longing still lingers in my heart. It is easy of accomplishment and at the same time hard to attain; hence it cannot be expressed. O Lord, it is easy for You to grant it; but due to my wretched condition it appears to me so hard to attain. Just as a pauper who has found a wish-yielding tree feels shy in asking for abundant wealth, little realizing its glory, even so my heart is possessed by doubt. Being the witness of all hearts, You know my mind; therefore, O my master, grant my desire." "O king, ask of Me unreservedly; there is nothing which I would not give you." (1–4)

दो॰—दानि सिरोमनि कृपानिधि नाथ कहउँ सतिभाउ।
चाहउँ तुम्हहि समान सुत प्रभु सन कवन दुराउ॥ १४९॥

"O crest-jewel of donors, O gracious lord, I tell You my sincere wish: I would have a son like You. I can have nothing to conceal from You." (149)

चौ॰—देखि प्रीति सुनि बचन अमोले। एवमस्तु करुनानिधि बोले॥
आपु सरिस खोजौं कहँ जाई। नृप तव तनय होब मैं आई॥ १॥
सतरूपहि बिलोकि कर जोरें। देबि मागु बरु जो रुचि तोरें॥
जो बरु नाथ चतुर नृप मागा। सोइ कृपाल मोहि अति प्रिय लागा॥ २॥
प्रभु परंतु सुठि होति ढिठाई। जदपि भगत हित तुम्हहि सोहाई॥
तुम्ह ब्रह्मादि जनक जग स्वामी। ब्रह्म सकल उर अंतरजामी॥ ३॥
अस समुझत मन संसय होई। कहा जो प्रभु प्रवान पुनि सोई॥
जे निज भगत नाथ तव अहहीं। जो सुख पावहिं जो गति लहहीं॥ ४॥

On seeing his love and hearing his invaluable words, the compassionate Lord said, "Amen. But where shall I go to find My equal ? I Myself, O king, shall be a son to you." Then, seeing Satarupa with her hands still folded, He said, "O good lady, ask whatever boon you please." "O gracious Lord, the boon which the clever king has just asked has appealed to me much. But it is great presumption, my Lord, even though such presumption is liked by You, O friend of the devotees. You are the progenitor even of Brahma and other gods, the lord of the universe and the Supreme Being who dwells within the heart of all. Realizing this, my mind is filled with doubt; but what You have said is infallible. O my master, the bliss that is enjoyed and the goal that is reached by Your own devotees,— (1–4)

दो॰—सोइ सुख सोइ गति सोइ भगति सोइ निज चरन सनेहु।
सोइ बिबेक सोइ रहनि प्रभु हमहि कृपा करि देहु॥ १५०॥

"Grant me in Your mercy, O Lord, that very bliss, the same destiny, the same devotion, the same attachment to Your feet, the same insight and the same mode of living." (150)

चौ०—सुनि मृदु गूढ़ रुचिर बर रचना। कृपासिंधु बोले मृदु बचना॥
जो कछु रुचि तुम्हरे मन माहीं। मैं सो दीन्ह सब संसय नाहीं॥ १॥
मातु बिबेक अलौकिक तोरें। कबहुँ न मिटिहि अनुग्रह मोरें॥
बंदि चरन मनु कहेउ बहोरी। अवर एक बिनती प्रभु मोरी॥ २॥
सुत बिषइक तव पद रति होऊ। मोहि बड़ मूढ़ कहै किन कोऊ॥
मनि बिनु फनि जिमि जल बिनु मीना। मम जीवन तिमि तुम्हहि अधीना॥ ३॥
अस बरु मागि चरन गहि रहेऊ। एवमस्तु करुनानिधि कहेऊ॥
अब तुम्ह मम अनुसासन मानी। बसहु जाइ सुरपति रजधानी॥ ४॥

Hearing the soft, pregnant, charming and excellent speech of Śatarūpā, the gracious Lord gently replied, "Whatever desire you cherish in your mind I have granted; you should have no doubt about it. Mother, by My grace your uncommon wisdom shall never fail." Bowing at His feet, Manu again said, "Lord, I have one more request to make. Let me have attachment to Your feet, of the same type as one has for a son, no matter if anyone calls me a big fool. Just as a snake cannot live without the gem on its hood and a fish without water, even so let my life be dependent on You (let me not survive without You) Asking this boon, the king remained clasping the Lord's feet till the All-merciful said, "Let it be so. Now, obeying My command go and dwell in the capital of Indra (the chief of gods). (1—4)

सो०—तहँ करि भोग बिसाल तात गएँ कछु काल पुनि।
होइहहु अवध भुआल तब मैं होब तुम्हार सुत॥ १५१॥

"Having enjoyed extensive enjoyments there you shall, after some time, be born as king of Ayodhyā; then, dear father, I will be your son. (151)

चौ०—इच्छामय नरबेष सँवारें। होइहउँ प्रगट निकेत तुम्हारें॥
अंसन्ह सहित देह धरि ताता। करिहउँ चरित भगत सुखदाता॥ १॥
जे सुनि सादर नर बड़भागी। भव तरिहहिं ममता मद त्यागी॥
आदिसक्ति जेहिं जग उपजाया। सोउ अवतरिहि मोरि यह माया॥ २॥
पुरउब मैं अभिलाष तुम्हारा। सत्य सत्य पन सत्य हमारा॥
पुनि पुनि अस कहि कृपानिधाना। अंतरधान भए भगवाना॥ ३॥
दंपति उर धरि भगत कृपाला। तेहिं आश्रम निवसे कछु काला॥
समय पाइ तनु तजि अनयासा। जाइ कीन्ह अमरावति बासा॥ ४॥

"Voluntarily assuming human guise I will manifest Myself in your house. Bodying Myself forth with My rays I will perform sportive acts which will be a source of delight to My devotees. Hearing of such exploits with reverence blessed men shall cross the ocean of worldly existence, renouncing

the feeling of meum and arrogance. This Māyā, who is no other than My primordial energy that has brought forth the universe, She too will manifest Herself. In this way I will accomplish your desire and this pledge of Mine shall never, never, never fail." Repeating this again and again, the gracious Lord vanished out of sight. Cherishing in their mind the image of the Lord who is so compassionate to His devotees, the wedded couple stayed in that hermitage for some time more. And dropping their body, when the time came, without the least pain they went and took their abode in Amarāvatī, the city of immortals. (1—4)

दो०—यह इतिहास पुनीत अति उमहि कही बृषकेतु ।
भरद्वाज सुनु अपर पुनि राम जनम कर हेतु ॥ १५२ ॥

This most sacred legend was related by Śiva (who has a bull emblazoned on His standard) to Umā. Bharadwāja, now hear yet another cause of Śrī Rāma's birth. (152)

[PAUSE 5 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—सुनु मुनि कथा पुनीत पुरानी । जो गिरिजा प्रति संभु बखानी ॥
बिस्व बिदित एक कैकय देसू । सत्यकेतु तहँ बसइ नरेसू ॥ १ ॥
धरम धुरंधर नीति निधाना । तेज प्रताप सील बलवाना ॥
तेहि कें भए जुगल सुत बीरा । सब गुन धाम महा रनधीरा ॥ २ ॥
राज धनी जो जेठ सुत आही । नाम प्रतापभानु अस ताही ॥
अपर सुतहि अरिमर्दन नामा । भुजबल अतुल अचल संग्रामा ॥ ३ ॥
भाइहि भाइहि परम समीती । सकल दोष छल बरजित प्रीती ॥
जेठे सुतहि राज नृप दीन्हा । हरि हित आपु गवन बन कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

Listen, O sage, to an old and sacred legend which was narrated by Śambhu to Girijā. There was a principality known by the name of Kaikaya which was celebrated throughout the world. A king named Satyaketu ruled there. He was a champion of virtue, a storehouse of political wisdom, dignified, glorious, amiable and powerful. He had two gallant sons, who were repositories of all virtues and most staunch in battle. The elder of the two and the heir to the throne was named Pratāpabhānu. The other was known by the name of Arimardana, who was unequalled in strength of arm and steady in battle. There was perfect unity between the two brothers and the affection each bore to the other was free from all blemish and guile. To the elder son the king resigned the throne and withdrew himself into the forest for the sake of devotion to Śrī Hari. (1—4)

दो०—जब प्रतापरबि भयउ नृप फिरी दोहाई देस ।
प्रजा पाल अति बेदबिधि कतहुँ नहीं अघ लेस ॥ १५३ ॥

When Pratāpabhānu became king, a proclamation to this effect was made throughout the land. He looked after his subjects with utmost care according to the precepts of the Vedas and there was not a speck of sin anywhere (in his kingdom). (153)

चौ०—नृप हितकारक सचिव सयाना । नाम धरमरुचि सुक्र समाना ॥
सचिव सयान बंधु बलबीरा । आपु प्रतापपुंज रनधीरा ॥ १ ॥
सेन संग चतुरंग अपारा । अमित सुभट सब समर जुझारा ॥
सेन बिलोकि राउ हरषाना । अरु बाजे गहगहे निसाना ॥ २ ॥
बिजय हेतु कटकई बनाई । सुदिन साधि नृप चलेउ बजाई ॥
जहँ तहँ परीं अनेक लराईं । जीते सकल भूप बरिआईं ॥ ३ ॥
सप्त दीप भुजबल बस कीन्हे । लै लै दंड छाड़ि नृप दीन्हे ॥
सकल अवनि मंडल तेहि काला । एक प्रतापभानु महिपाला ॥ ४ ॥

The prime minister, Dharmaruchi by name, was a second Śukra* and was as devoted to the king as he was wise. With a prudent counseller and a gallant and powerful brother, the king himself was an embodiment of glory and daring in war. He owned a vast army consisting of horse and foot, chariots and elephants. It had numberless excellent warriors all of whom fought fearlessly in battle. The king rejoiced to see his army and there was a tumultuous sound of kettledrums. He collected a special force for the conquest of the world, and availing himself of an auspicious day marched forth with beat of drums. A number of battles were fought here and there and all hostile kings were brought to their knees by superior might. By the strength of his arm he reduced all the seven sections of the terrestrial region and let the princes go on payment of tribute. Now Pratāpabhānu was the undisputed sovereign of the entire globe. (1—4)

दो०—स्वबस बिस्व करि बाहुबल निज पुर कीन्ह प्रबेसु ।
अरथ धरम कामादि सुख सेवइ समयँ नरेसु ॥ १५४ ॥

Having thus subjugated the whole universe by the might of his arm, the king re-entered his capital. He devoted himself to the pleasures of wealth, religious practices and sense-gratification etc. at the appropriate time. (154)

चौ०—भूप प्रतापभानु बल पाई । कामधेनु भै भूमि सुहाई ॥
सब दुख बरजित प्रजा सुखारी । धरमसील सुंदर नर नारी ॥ १ ॥
सचिव धरमरुचि हरि पद प्रीती । नृप हित हेतु सिखव नित नीती ॥
गुर सुर संत पितर महिदेवा । करइ सदा नृप सब कै सेवा ॥ २ ॥
भूप धरम जे बेद बखाने । सकल करइ सादर सुख माने ॥
दिन प्रति देइ बिबिध बिधि दाना । सुनइ सास्त्र बर बेद पुराना ॥ ३ ॥
नाना बापीं कूप तड़ागा । सुमन बाटिका सुंदर बागा ॥
बिप्रभवन सुरभवन सुहाए । सब तीरथन्ह बिचित्र बनाए ॥ ४ ॥

Invigorated by King Pratapabhānu's might, the charming earth became a cow of plenty as it were (yielded all one's coveted products). The people were happy and free from all sorrows and both men and women were good-looking and virtuous. The minister, Dharmaruchi, was devoted to the feet of Śrī Hari; in the interest of his royal master he advised him on state policy every day.

* The celebrated preceptor of the Daityas, who is noted for his political insight and is credited with the authorship of the famous work on political science, *Śukranīti*.

Preceptors, gods, saints, manes and Brahmans—the king invariably served them all. Whatever duties have been enjoined on a king in the Vedas, he gladly and devoutly performed. He bestowed gifts of various kinds every day and listened to the best scriptures including the Vedas and the Puranas. In all holy places he constructed many small and big wells and tanks, flower gardens and lovely orchards, dwellings for the Brahmans and beautiful temples of wonderful architecture. (1—4)

दो॰—जहँ लगि कहे पुरान श्रुति एक एक सब जाग ।
बार सहस्र सहस्र नृप किए सहित अनुराग ॥ १५५ ॥

Whatever sacrifices have been enjoined in the Vedas and the Puranas, the king devoutly performed each one of them a thousand times. (155)

चौ॰—हृदयँ न कछु फल अनुसंधाना । भूप बिबेकी परम सुजाना ॥
करइ जे धरम करम मन बानी । बासुदेव अर्पित नृप ग्यानी ॥ १ ॥
चढ़ि बर बाजि बार एक राजा । मृगया कर सब साजि समाजा ॥
बिंध्याचल गभीर बन गयऊ । मृग पुनीत बहु मारत भयऊ ॥ २ ॥
फिरत बिपिन नृप दीख बराहू । जनु बन दुरेउ ससिहि ग्रसि राहू ॥
बड़ बिधु नहिं समात मुख माहीं । मनहुँ क्रोध बस उगिलत नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
कोल कराल दसन छबि गाई । तनु बिसाल पीवर अधिकाई ॥
घुरुघुरात हय आरौ पाएँ । चकित बिलोकत कान उठाएँ ॥ ४ ॥

There was no seeking for any reward in his heart; the king was a man of great intelligence and wisdom. Whatever meritorious act he performed in thought, word or deed, the wise king dedicated it to Lord Vasudeva (the all-pervading God Visnu). Equipping himself with all the outfit of hunting, the king mounted a gallant steed one day and, entering the dense forest of the Vindhya range, killed many a sacred deer. While ranging in the wood he espied a wild boar. It looked as if with the moon in his mouth the demon Rāhu had hid in the forest. The orb was too large to be contained in the mouth, yet in his rage he would not disgorge it. Thus have I chosen to portray the beauty of the frightful tusks of the boar, while its body too was of an enormous size and bulk. Growling at the tramp of the horse and pricking up its ears it gazed with a startled look. (1—4)

दो॰—नील महीधर सिखर सम देखि बिसाल बराहु ।
चपरि चलेउ हय सुटुकि नृप हाँकि न होइ निबाहु ॥ १५६ ॥

On seeing the huge boar, which resembled a purple mountain-peak, the king whipped the horse and advanced rapidly, challenging the boar at the same time and saying it could no longer escape. (156)

चौ॰—आवत देखि अधिक रव बाजी । चलेउ बराह मरुत गति भाजी ॥
तुरत कीन्ह नृप सर संधाना । महि मिलि गयउ बिलोकत बाना ॥ १ ॥

तकि तकि तीर महीस चलावा । करि छल सुअर सरीर बचावा ॥
प्रगटत दुरत जाइ मृग भागा । रिस बस भूप चलेउ सँग लागा ॥ २ ॥
गयउ दूरि घन गहन बराहू । जहँ नाहिन गज बाजि निबाहू ॥
अति अकेल बन बिपुल कलेसू । तदपि न मृग मग तजइ नरेसू ॥ ३ ॥
कोल बिलोकि भूप बड़ धीरा । भागि पैठ गिरिगुहाँ गभीरा ॥
अगम देखि नृप अति पछिताई । फिरेउ महाबन परेउ भुलाई ॥ ४ ॥

When it saw the horse coming on with a great noise, the boar took to flight swift as wind The king lost no time in fitting the arrow to his bow and the boar crouched as soon as it saw the shaft. The king discharged his arrows taking a steady aim each time, but the boar saved itself by its wiliness. The beast rushed on, now hiding and now emerging into view; while the king in much excitement followed closely on its track. The boar went afar into a dense thicket, which was impenetrable by horse or elephant. Even though the king was all by himself and was faced with untold hardships in the forest still he would not abandon the chase. Seeing the king so determined, the boar slunk away into a deep mountain-cave. When the king perceived that there was no access to the cave, he had to return much disappointed; and, what was worse, he lost his track in the great forest. (1—4)

दो०—खेद खिन्न छुद्धित तृषित राजा बाजि समेत ।
खोजत ब्याकुल सरित सर जल बिनु भयउ अचेत ॥ १५७ ॥

Exhausted with much exertion and oppressed by hunger and thirst, the king and his horse kept searching for a stream or pond and almost fainted for want of water. (157)

चौ०—फिरत बिपिन आश्रम एक देखा । तहँ बस नृपति कपट मुनिबेषा ॥
जासु देस नृप लीन्ह छड़ाई । समर सेन तजि गयउ पराई ॥ १ ॥
समय प्रतापभानु कर जानी । आपन अति असमय अनुमानी ॥
गयउ न गृह मन बहुत गलानी । मिला न राजहि नृप अभिमानी ॥ २ ॥
रिस उर मारि रंक जिमि राजा । बिपिन बसइ तापस कें साजा ॥
तासु समीप गवन नृप कीन्हा । यह प्रतापरबि तेहिं तब चीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
राउ तृषित नहिं सो पहिचाना । देखि सुबेष महामुनि जाना ॥
उतरि तुरग तें कीन्ह प्रनामा । परम चतुर न कहेउ निज नामा ॥ ४ ॥

While wandering in the forest he espied a hermitage. In that hermitage dwelt, in the disguise of a hermit, a monarch who had been despoiled of his kingdom by Pratāpabhānu and who had run away from the field of battle deserting his army. Knowing that the time was propitious for Pratāpabhānu and most unfavourable to his own self, he felt much disgusted at heart and refused to return home; and he was too proud to come to terms with the victor. Suppressing the anger in his own heart the ex-king lived in the forest like a pauper in the garb of an anchorite. It was to him that King Pratāpabhānu went and he for his part immediately recognized that

the newcomer was no other than Pratāpabhānu. Overcome by thirst, the latter, however, could not recognize the ex-king. Perceiving his holy garb Pratāpabhānu took him to be a great sage and, getting down from his horse, made obeisance to him. The king was, however, too astute to disclose his name. (1—4)

दो०—भूपति तृषित बिलोकि तेहिं सरबरु दीन्ह देखाइ ।
मज्जन पान समेत हय कीन्ह नृपति हरषाइ ॥ १५८ ॥

Seeing King Pratāpabhānu thirsty, he showed him a good lake and the king as well as his horse gladly bathed in it and drank from it. (158)

चौ०—गै श्रम सकल सुखी नृप भयऊ । निज आश्रम तापस लै गयऊ ॥
आसन दीन्ह अस्त रबि जानी । पुनि तापस बोलेउ मृदु बानी ॥ १ ॥
को तुम्ह कस बन फिरहु अकेलें । सुंदर जुबा जीव परहेलें ॥
चक्रबर्ति के लच्छन तोरें । देखत दया लागि अति मोरें ॥ २ ॥
नाम प्रतापभानु अवनीसा । तासु सचिव मैं सुनहु मुनीसा ॥
फिरत अहेरें परेउँ भुलाई । बड़ें भाग देखेउँ पद आई ॥ ३ ॥
हम कहँ दुर्लभ दरस तुम्हारा । जानत हौं कछु भल होनिहारा ॥
कह मुनि तात भयउ अँधिआरा । जोजन सत्तरि नगरु तुम्हारा ॥ ४ ॥

The whole fatigue was gone and the king heaved a sigh of relief. The hermit thereafter took him back to his hermitage; and perceiving that it was sunset now he gave him a seat and then spoke to him in polite terms, "Who are you and wherefore do you risk your life by roaming in the forest all alone, even though you are so young and handsome ? Reading the marks of an emperor on your person I am moved with great pity." "Listen, O great sage: there is a king named Pratāpabhānu; I am his minister. Ranging in pursuit of game I have lost my way and by great good fortune I have been led into your presence. Your sight is a rare boon to me; it leads me to believe that something good is about to befall me." The hermit said, "It is now dusk, my son; and your city is five hundred and sixty miles away. (1—4)

दो०—निसा घोर गंभीर बन पंथ न सुनहु सुजान ।
बसहु आजु अस जानि तुम्ह जाएहु होत बिहान ॥ १५९ (क) ॥

"Listen, O friend: dark and dreary is the night, and the forest is dense and trackless; knowing this, tarry here overnight and depart next morning." (159 A)

तुलसी जसि भवतब्यता तैसी मिलइ सहाइ ।
आपुनु आवइ ताहि पहिं ताहि तहाँ लै जाइ ॥ १५९ (ख) ॥

The inevitable, says Tulasīdāsa, is invariably preceded by circumstances that are favourable to it. Either it comes to a man or takes him to the cause of his doom. (159 B)

चौ०—भलेहिं नाथ आयसु धरि सीसा । बाँधि तुरग तरु बैठ महीसा ॥
नृप बहु भाँति प्रसंसेउ ताही । चरन बंदि निज भाग्य सराही ॥ १ ॥

पुनि बोलेउ मृदु गिरा सुहाई । जानि पिता प्रभु करउँ ढिठाई ॥
मोहि मुनीस सुत सेवक जानी । नाथ नाम निज कहहु बखानी ॥ २ ॥
तेहि न जान नृप नृपहि सो जाना । भूप सुहृद सो कपट सयाना ॥
बैरी पुनि छत्री पुनि राजा । छल बल कीन्ह चहइ निज काजा ॥ ३ ॥
समुझि राजसुख दुखित अराती । अवाँ अनल इव सुलगइ छाती ॥
सरल बचन नृप के सुनि काना । बयर सँभारि हृदयँ हरषाना ॥ ४ ॥

"Very well, my lord," the king replied; and bowing to the hermit's command he tied up the horse to a tree and then sat down. The king extolled him in many ways and bowing at his feet congratulated himself. He then spoke to him in soft and endearing terms, "Regarding you as a father, my lord, I venture to address you. Looking upon me as your son and servant O great sage, pray tell me your name in full, my master." Although the king did not recognize him, he recognized the king. While the king had a guileless heart, the hermit was a pastmaster in fraud. Being an enemy in the first instance, and a Kṣatriya on top of it and again of royal blood, he sought to accomplish his end by dint of his cunning. The thought of the pleasures of royalty had made the enemy king sad; the fire of jealousy smouldered within his heart like that of a furnace. On hearing the artless words of Pratāpabhānu and recalling the grudge he had nursed against him, the hermit felt delighted at heart. (1—4)

दो०—कपट बोरि बानी मृदुल बोलेउ जुगुति समेत ।
नाम हमार भिखारि अब निर्धन रहित निकेत ॥ १६० ॥

He uttered the following soft yet false and artful words, "My name is now Bhikhārī (a mendicant), penniless and homeless as I am." (160)

चौ०—कह नृप जे बिग्यान निधाना । तुम्ह सारिखे गलित अभिमाना ॥
सदा रहहिं अपनपौ दुराएँ । सब बिधि कुसल कुबेष बनाएँ ॥ १ ॥
तेहि तें कहहिं संत श्रुति टेरें । परम अकिंचन प्रिय हरि केरें ॥
तुम्ह सम अधन भिखारि अगेहा । होत बिरंचि सिवहि संदेहा ॥ २ ॥
जोसि सोसि तव चरन नमामी । मो पर कृपा करिअ अब स्वामी ॥
सहज प्रीति भूपति कै देखी । आपु बिषय बिस्वास बिसेषी ॥ ३ ॥
सब प्रकार राजहि अपनाई । बोलेउ अधिक सनेह जनाई ॥
सुनु सतिभाउ कहउँ महिपाला । इहाँ बसत बीते बहु काला ॥ ४ ॥

The king replied, "Those who are repositories of wisdom and free from pride like you always keep their reality concealed; even though proficient in every way, they prefer to remain in tattered clothes. That is why saints as well as the Vedas proclaim that those who are supremely indigent are held most dear by Śrī Hari. Penniless and homeless beggars like you fill the minds of even Virañchi and Śiva with doubt. Whoever you may be, I bow at Your feet; now be gracious to me, my lord." When the hermit saw the king's artless affection and extraordinary faith in him, he won him over in every way and

spoke with a still greater affection, "Listen, O king; I tell you sincerely that I have dwelt here for long. (1–4)

दो०—अब लगि मोहि न मिलेउ कोउ मैं न जनावउँ काहु ।
लोकमान्यता अनल सम कर तप कानन दाहु ॥ १६१ (क) ॥

"No one has come to me so far nor do I make myself known to anyone; for popular esteem is like a wild fire, which consumes the forest of penance (*i. e.*, neutralizes it). (161 A)

सो०—तुलसी देखि सुबेषु भूलहिं मूढ़ न चतुर नर ।
सुंदर केकिहि पेखु बचन सुधा सम असन अहि ॥ १६१ (ख) ॥

Not only fools, says Tulasīdāsa, but even clever men are taken in by fair appearances. Look at the beautiful peacock: though its notes are sweet like nectar, it devours snakes. (161 B)

चौ०—तातें गुपुत रहउँ जग माहीं । हरि तजि किमपि प्रयोजन नाहीं ॥
प्रभु जानत सब बिनहिं जनाएँ । कहहु कवनि सिधि लोक रिझाएँ ॥ १ ॥
तुम्ह सुचि सुमति परम प्रिय मोरें । प्रीति प्रतीति मोहि पर तोरें ॥
अब जौं तात दुरावउँ तोही । दारुन दोष घटइ अति मोही ॥ २ ॥
जिमि जिमि तापसु कथइ उदासा । तिमि तिमि नृपहि उपज बिस्वासा ॥
देखा स्वबस कर्म मन बानी । तब बोला तापस बगध्यानी ॥ ३ ॥
नाम हमार एकतनु भाई । सुनि नृप बोलेउ पुनि सिरु नाई ॥
कहहु नाम कर अरथ बखानी । मोहि सेवक अति आपन जानी ॥ ४ ॥

"That is why I live in this world away from the public gaze. I have little to do with anything other than Śrī Hari. The Lord knows everything without being told; tell me, then, what is to be gained by humouring the world. You are sincere and intelligent and are therefore supremely dear to me; and I too have earned your affection and confidence. Now, my son, if I were to keep anything from you, I shall incur the most severe blame." The more the hermit talked of his indifference to the world the more trustful grew the king. When the false anchorite saw the king devoted to him in thought, word and deed, he said, "My name, brother, is Ekatanu." Hearing this, the king bowed his head and asked further, "Kindly explain to me the meaning of this appellation, recognizing me as your faithful servant. (1–4)

दो०—आदिसृष्टि उपजी जबहिं तब उतपति भै मोरि ।
नाम एकतनु हेतु तेहि देह न धरी बहोरि ॥ १६२ ॥

"My birth took place at the first dawn of creation. Since then I have never taken another body; that is why I am called Ekatanu. (162)

चौ०—जनि आचरजु करहु मन माहीं । सुत तप तें दुर्लभ कछु नाहीं ॥
तपबल तें जग सृजइ बिधाता । तपबल बिष्नु भए परित्राता ॥ १ ॥
तपबल संभु करहिं संघारा । तप तें अगम न कछु संसारा ॥
भयउ नृपहि सुनि अति अनुरागा । कथा पुरातन कहै सो लागा ॥ २ ॥

करम धरम इतिहास अनेका । करइ निरूपन बिरति बिबेका ॥
उदभव पालन प्रलय कहानी । कहेसि अमित आचरज बखानी ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि महीप तापस बस भयऊ । आपन नाम कहन तब लयऊ ॥
कह तापस नृप जानउँ तोही । कीन्हेहु कपट लाग भल मोही ॥ ४ ॥

"Marvel not, my son, to hear this; for nothing is too difficult to obtain through penance. By dint of penance Brahmā creates the universe; by dint of penance Viṣṇu assumed the role of its protector. By dint of penance, again, Śambhu destroys the world; there is nothing in this world which cannot be attained through penance." Hearing this, the king felt much enamoured and the hermit commenced relating old legends. Having discussed topics of Karma (action) and Dharma (duty) and told many legends bearing on them, he discoursed on dispassion and knowledge. And he further related at length countless marvellous stories connected with the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the universe. Hearing all this the king completely yielded to the influence of the hermit and then proceeded to tell him his real name. Said the hermit, "O king, I know you. Even though you tried to deceive me, I appreciated this move on your part. (1–4)

सो०—सुनु महीस असि नीति जहँ तहँ नाम न कहहिं नृप ।
मोहि तोहि पर अति प्रीति सोइ चतुरता बिचारि तव ॥ १६३ ॥

"O king, the political maxim is that kings should not disclose their name in all cases. And when I thought of your political sagacity, I conceived great love for you. (163)

चौ०—नाम तुम्हार प्रतापदिनेसा । सत्यकेतु तव पिता नरेसा ॥
गुर प्रसाद सब जानिअ राजा । कहिअ न आपन जानि अकाजा ॥ १ ॥
देखि तात तव सहज सुधाई । प्रीति प्रतीति नीति निपुनाई ॥
उपजि परी ममता मन मोरें । कहउँ कथा निज पूछे तोरें ॥ २ ॥
अब प्रसन्न मैं संसय नाहीं । मागु जो भूप भाव मन माहीं ॥
सुनि सुबचन भूपति हरषाना । गहि पद बिनय कीन्हि बिधि नाना ॥ ३ ॥
कृपासिंधु मुनि दरसन तोरें । चारि पदारथ करतल मोरें ॥
प्रभुहि तथापि प्रसन्न बिलोकी । मागि अगम बर होउँ असोकी ॥ ४ ॥

"Your name is Pratāpabhānu; King Satyaketu was your father. O king, by the grace of my preceptor I know everything; but foreseeing my own harm I refuse to tell everything I know. When I saw your natural straightforwardness, affection, faith and political wisdom, I conceived a spontaneous affection for you; and that is why I told you my own story on your asking. I am now pleased; doubt not and ask what you will, O king." Hearing these agreeable words, the king rejoiced and, clasping the hermit's feet, supplicated to him in many ways. "O gracious sage, by your very sight I have within my grasp all the four ends of human existence (viz., religious merit, wealth, enjoyment and final beatitude). Yet, as I see my lord so gracious, I would ask a boon which is impossible to attain otherwise, and thereby overcome sorrow. (1–4)

दो०—जरा मरन दुख रहित तनु समर जितै जनि कोउ ।
एकछत्र रिपुहीन महि राज कलप सत होउ ॥ १६४ ॥

"Let my body be free from old age, death and suffering; let no one vanquish me in battle and let me enjoy undisputed sovereignty over the globe for a hundred Kalpas (repetitions of creation) and let me have no enemies." (164)

चौ०—कह तापस नृप ऐसेइ होऊ । कारन एक कठिन सुनु सोऊ ॥
कालउ तुअ पद नाइहि सीसा । एक बिप्रकुल छाड़ि महीसा ॥ १ ॥
तपबल बिप्र सदा बरिआरा । तिन्ह के कोप न कोउ रखवारा ॥
जौं बिप्रन्ह बस करहु नरेसा । तौ तुअ बस बिधि बिष्नु महेसा ॥ २ ॥
चल न ब्रह्मकुल सन बरिआई । सत्य कहउँ दोउ भुजा उठाई ॥
बिप्र श्राप बिनु सुनु महिपाला । तोर नास नहिं कवनेहुँ काला ॥ ३ ॥
हरषेउ राउ बचन सुनि तासू । नाथ न होइ मोर अब नासू ॥
तव प्रसाद प्रभु कृपानिधाना । मो कहुँ सर्ब काल कल्याना ॥ ४ ॥

Said the anchorite, "So be it, O king. But there is one difficulty; hear it too. 'Even Death shall bow his head at your feet (much more those who are subject to death). The only exception shall be the Brahmans, O ruler of the earth. The Brahmans are ever powerful by virtue of their penance; no one can deliver from their wrath. If you can reduce the Brahmans to your will, O king, even Brahmā, Viṣṇu and the great Lord Śiva shall be at your command. Might is of no avail against the Brahmans; with both arms raised to heaven I tell you this truth. Listen, O sovereign; if you escape the Brahman's curse, you shall never perish." Hearing his words, the king rejoiced and said, "My lord, I shall no longer die. By your grace, O benevolent master, I shall be blessed at all times." (1—4)

दो०—एवमस्तु कहि कपटमुनि बोला कुटिल बहोरि ।
मिलब हमार भुलाब निज कहहु त हमहि न खोरि ॥ १६५ ॥

"Amen!" said the false anchorite, and added with crafty intent, "If you tell anyone about my meeting with you and your straying away, the fault shall not be mine. (165)

चौ०—तातें मैं तोहि बरजउँ राजा । कहें कथा तव परम अकाजा ॥
छठें श्रवन यह परत कहानी । नास तुम्हार सत्य मम बानी ॥ १ ॥
यह प्रगटें अथवा द्विजश्रापा । नास तोर सुनु भानुप्रतापा ॥
आन उपायँ निधन तव नाहीं । जौं हरि हर कोपहिं मन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
सत्य नाथ पद गहि नृप भाषा । द्विज गुर कोप कहहु को राखा ॥
राखइ गुर जौं कोप बिधाता । गुर बिरोध नहिं कोउ जग त्राता ॥ ३ ॥
जौं न चलब हम कहे तुम्हारें । होउ नास नहिं सोच हमारें ॥
एकहिं डर डरपत मन मोरा । प्रभु महिदेव श्राप अति घोरा ॥ ४ ॥

"I warn you, O king, because great harm shall befall you if you relate this incident to anyone. If this talk happens to reach a third pair of ears, I tell you the truth, you are doomed. O Pratāpabhānu, if you divulge this secret or if a Brahman curses you, you are undone. In no other way shall you die, even if Śrī Hari and Hara get angry with you." "It is true, my lord," said the king, clasping the hermit's feet. "Tell me, who can deliver from the wrath of a Brahman or a spiritual preceptor? A Guru can save one even if one has evoked the wrath of Brahmā; but in the event of a quarrel with one's preceptor there is no one in the world who can save. If I do not follow your advice, let me perish; I care not. My mind is disturbed by only one fear; the curse of a Brahman, my lord, is something most terrible. (1—4)

दो॰—होहिं बिप्र बस कवन बिधि कहहु कृपा करि सोउ ।
तुम्ह तजि दीनदयाल निज हितू न देखउँ कोउ ॥ १६६ ॥

"How shall I be able to win over the Brahmans? Kindly tell me that too. I see no friend other than you, my gracious lord." (166)

चौ॰—सुनु नृप बिबिध जतन जग माहीं । कष्टसाध्य पुनि होहिं कि नाहीं ॥
अहइ एक अति सुगम उपाई । तहाँ परंतु एक कठिनाई ॥ १ ॥
मम आधीन जुगुति नृप सोई । मोर जाब तव नगर न होई ॥
आजु लगें अरु जब तें भयऊँ । काहू के गृह ग्राम न गयऊँ ॥ २ ॥
जौं न जाउँ तव होइ अकाजू । बना आइ असमंजस आजू ॥
सुनि महीस बोलेउ मृदु बानी । नाथ निगम असि नीति बखानी ॥ ३ ॥
बड़े सनेह लघुन्ह पर करहीं । गिरि निज सिरनि सदा तृन धरहीं ॥
जलधि अगाध मौलि बह फेनू । संतत धरनि धरत सिर रेनू ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, O king: there are various expedients in this world. But they are hard to accomplish and are of doubtful issue besides. Of course, there is one very simple device; but that too involves one difficulty. Its contrivance depends on me; but my going to your city is out of the question. Ever since I was born I have never been to anybody's house or village so far. And if I do not go, it will be a misfortune for you. I am therefore in a dilemma today." Hearing this, the king replied in a polite language, "My lord, there is a maxim laid down in the Vedas: the great show kindness to the small. Mountains always bear tiny blades of grass on their tops, the fathomless ocean carries floating foam on its breast and the earth ever bears dust on its bosom." (1—4)

दो॰—अस कहि गहे नरेस पद स्वामी होहु कृपाल ।
मोहि लागि दुख सहिअ प्रभु सज्जन दीनदयाल ॥ १६७ ॥

So saying, the king clasped the hermit's feet and said, "Be gracious to me, my master. You are a saint, compassionate to the humble; therefore, my lord, take this trouble on my behalf." (167)

चौ॰—जानि नृपहि आपन आधीना । बोला तापस कपट प्रबीना ॥
सत्य कहउँ भूपति सुनु तोही । जग नाहिन दुर्लभ कछु मोही" ॥ १ ॥

अवसि काज मैं करिहउँ तोरा । मन तन बचन भगत तैं मोरा ॥
जोग जुगुति तप मंत्र प्रभाऊ । फलइ तबहिं जब करिअ दुराऊ ॥ २ ॥
जौं नरेस मैं करौं रसोई । तुम्ह परुसहु मोहि जान न कोई ॥
अन्न सो जोइ जोइ भोजन करई । सोइ सोइ तव आयसु अनुसरई ॥ ३ ॥
पुनि तिन्ह के गृह जेवँइ जोऊ । तव बस होइ भूप सुनु सोऊ ॥
जाइ उपाय रचहु नृप एहू । संबत भरि संकलप करेहू ॥ ४ ॥

Knowing that the king was completely under his influence, the hermit, who was clever at deception, said, "Listen, O king: I tell you the truth. For me in this world there is nothing hard to obtain. I will surely accomplish your object, devoted as you are in thought, word and deed to me. The power of Yoga (contemplation), planning, penance and mystic formulas works only when secrecy is maintained about them. O king, if I cook food and you serve i and if nobody comes to know me, whoever tastes the food so prepared shall become amenable to your orders. Again, I tell you, whosoever dines at the house of such people shall, O king, be dominated by your will. Go and operate this scheme, O king, and take this vow for a whole year. (1—4)

दो०—नित नूतन द्विज सहस सत बरेहु सहित परिवार ।
मैं तुम्हरे संकलप लगि दिनहिं करबि जेवनार ॥ १६८ ॥

"Every day invite a new set of a hundred thousand Brahmans with their families; while I, so long as your vow lasts, shall provide the daily banquet. (168)

चौ०—एहि बिधि भूप कष्ट अति थोरें । होइहहिं सकल बिप्र बस तोरें ॥
करिहहिं बिप्र होम मख सेवा । तेहिं प्रसंग सहजेहिं बस देवा ॥ १ ॥
और एक तोहि कहउँ लखाऊ । मैं एहिं बेष न आउब काऊ ॥
तुम्हरे उपरोहित कहुँ राया । हरि आनब मैं करि निज माया ॥ २ ॥
तपबल तेहि करि आपु समाना । रखिहउँ इहाँ बरष परवाना ॥
मैं धरि तासु बेषु सुनु राजा । सब बिधि तोर सँवारब काजा ॥ ३ ॥
गै निसि बहुत सयन अब कीजे । मोहि तोहि भूप भेंट दिन तीजे ॥
मैं तपबल तोहि तुरग समेता । पहुँचैहउँ सोवतहि निकेता ॥ ४ ॥

"In this way, O king, with little exertion all the Brahmans shall be reduced to your will. The Brahmans in their turn will offer oblations into the sacred fire, perform big sacrifices and practise adoration; and through that channel the gods too shall be easily won over. I give you one more sign. I will never come in this form. By my delusive power, O king, I will carry off your family priest and, making him just like myself by dint of my penance, will keep him here for the year; while I, O king, will take his form and manage everything for you. The night is far gone, so you had better retire now; on the third day we will meet again. By my penitential power I will convey you home, both you and your horse, even while you are asleep. (1—4)

दो०—मैं आउब सोइ बेषु धरि पहिचानेहु तब मोहि ।
जब एकांत बोलाइ सब कथा सुनावौं तोहि ॥ १६९ ॥

"I will come in the form I have told you, and you will recognize me when I call you aside and remind you of all this." (169)

चौ०—सयन कीन्ह नृप आयसु मानी । आसन जाइ बैठ छलग्यानी ॥
श्रमित भूप निद्रा अति आई । सो किमि सोव सोच अधिकाई ॥ १ ॥
कालकेतु निसिचर तहँ आवा । जेहिं सूकर होइ नृपहि भुलावा ॥
परम मित्र तापस नृप केरा । जानइ सो अति कपट घनेरा ॥ २ ॥
तेहि के सत सुत अरु दस भाई । खल अति अजय देव दुखदाई ॥
प्रथमहिं भूप समर सब मारे । बिप्र संत सुर देखि दुखारे ॥ ३ ॥
तेहिं खल पाछिल बयरु सँभारा । तापस नृप मिलि मंत्र बिचारा ॥
जेहिं रिपु छय सोइ रचेन्हि उपाऊ । भावी बस न जान कछु राऊ ॥ ४ ॥

The king went to sleep in obedience to the hermit; while the counterfeit sage returned to his own seat and sat down there. Deep sleep came upon the weary monarch; but how could the other fellow sleep, distracted as he was with anxiety. The demon Kālaketu made his appearance there; it was he who had assumed the form of a boar and led the king astray. A great friend of the hermit-king, he was skilled in manifold ways of deceit. He had a hundred sons and ten brothers, who were great villains, invincible and annoying to the gods. Seeing the Brahmans, saints and gods in distress the king had already killed them all in battle. Recalling the old grudge the wretch conspired with the hermit-king and contrived a plot for the extermination of the enemy; but, as fate would have it, the king knew nothing of it. (1—4)

दो०—रिपु तेजसी अकेल अपि लघु करि गनिअ न ताहु ।
अजहुँ देत दुख रबि ससिहि सिर अवसेषित राहु ॥ १७० ॥

A spirited foe, even though left alone, should not be lightly regarded. The demon Rāhu,* who has nothing left of him but his head, is able to torment both the sun and moon even to this day. (170)

चौ०—तापस नृप निज सखहि निहारी । हरषि मिलेउ उठि भयउ सुखारी ॥
मित्रहि कहि सब कथा सुनाई । जातुधान बोला सुख पाई ॥ १ ॥
अब साधेउँ रिपु सुनहु नरेसा । जौं तुम्ह कीन्ह मोर उपदेसा ॥
परिहरि सोच रहहु तुम्ह सोई । बिनु औषध बिआधि बिधि खोई ॥ २ ॥
कुल समेत रिपु मूल बहाई । चौथें दिवस मिलब मैं आई ॥
तापस नृपहि बहुत परितोषी । चला महाकपटी अतिरोषी ॥ ३ ॥
भानुप्रतापहि बाजि समेता । पहुँचाएसि छन माझ निकेता ॥
नृपहि नारि पहिं सयन कराई । हयगृहँ बाँधेसि बाजि बनाई ॥ ४ ॥

* According to the Hindu belief a solar or lunar eclipse takes place only when in the astral plane the demon Rāhu, a sworn enemy of both the sun-god and the moon-god, devours the one or the other either wholly or partly. The demon, however, consists of the head alone, his trunk having been cut off by God Viṣṇu while he was unlawfully attempting to partake of the nectar which was being served to the gods. Since, however, he had already tasted the nectar, the head became immortal.

The hermit-king was delighted to see his ally and rose to meet him. The meeting gave him much satisfaction and he related the whole story to his friend. The demon too was glad and said, "Listen, O king: since you have followed my advice, take the enemy as subdued. Cease to worry now and lay yourself to rest. God has effected a cure without the use of a medicine. I will sweep away the enemy root and branch and see you on the fourth day." Fully reassuring the hermit-king, the arch-impostor, who was highly irascible, departed. In an instant he conveyed Pratāpabhānu to his palace, horse and all. Putting the king to bed beside his queen, he tied up the horse in the stall in the proper way. (1—4)

दो०—राजा के उपरोहितहि हरि लै गयउ बहोरि ।
लै राखेसि गिरि खोह महुँ मायाँ करि मति भोरि ॥ १७१ ॥

Again he carried off the king's family priest and, depriving him of his senses by his supernatural power, kept him in a mountain-cave. (171)

चौ०—आपु बिरचि उपरोहित रूपा । परेउ जाइ तेहि सेज अनूपा ॥
जागेउ नृप अनभएँ बिहाना । देखि भवन अति अचरजु माना ॥ १ ॥
मुनि महिमा मन महुँ अनुमानी । उठेउ गवँहिं जेहिं जान न रानी ॥
कानन गयउ बाजि चढ़ि तेहीं । पुर नर नारि न जानेउ केहीं ॥ २ ॥
गएँ जाम जुग भूपति आवा । घर घर उत्सव बाज बधावा ॥
उपरोहितहि देख जब राजा । चकित बिलोक सुमिरि सोइ काजा ॥ ३ ॥
जुग सम नृपहि गए दिन तीनी । कपटी मुनि पद रह मति लीनी ॥
समय जानि उपरोहित आवा । नृपहि मते सब कहि समुझावा ॥ ४ ॥

Himself assuming the form of the family priest, the demon went and lay down on the former's sumptuous bed. The king woke even before daybreak and felt much astonished to find himself at home. Attributing the miracle to the supernatural power of the sage, he got up quietly, unperceived by the queen. Mounting the same horse he rode off to the woods without any man or woman of the city knowing it. When it was midday, the king returned; there was rejoicing and festal music in every house. When the king saw his family-priest, he looked at him in amazement, recollecting the object he held so dear to his heart. The interval of three days hung heavy on the monarch as an age, his mind being set on the feet of the false anchorite. At the appointed time the priest came and reminded him in detail of all that had been agreed upon. (1—4)

दो०—नृप हरषेउ पहिचानि गुरु भ्रम बस रहा न चेत ।
बरे तुरत सत सहस बर बिप्र कुटुंब समेत ॥ १७२ ॥

The king was delighted to recognize his preceptor (in the priest's form); his mind was too clouded to have any sense left. At once he invited a hundred thousand chosen Brahmans with their families. (172)

चौ०—उपरोहित जेवनार बनाई । छरस चारि बिधि जसि श्रुति गाई ॥
मायामय तेहिं कीन्हि रसोई । बिंजन बहु गनि सकइ न कोई ॥ १ ॥
बिबिध मृगन्ह कर आमिष राँधा । तेहि महुँ बिप्र माँसु खल साँधा ॥
भोजन कहुँ सब बिप्र बोलाए । पद पखारि सादर बैठाए ॥ २ ॥
परुसन जबहिं लाग महिपाला । भै अकासबानी तेहि काला ॥
बिप्रबृंद उठि उठि गृह जाहू । है बड़ि हानि अन्न जनि खाहू ॥ ३ ॥
भयउ रसोईं भूसुर माँसू । सब द्विज उठे मानि बिस्वासू ॥
भूप बिकल मति मोहँ भुलानी । भावी बस न आव मुख बानी ॥ ४ ॥

The priest cooked four kinds of foods with six different tastes as mentioned in the Vedas. He prepared an illusory banquet and a variety of seasoned dishes more than one could count. Dressing the flesh of a variety of animals the wretch mixed with it the cooked flesh of Brahmans. All the invited Brahmans were then called for the dinner. Their feet were duly washed and they were respectfully shown to their places. The moment the king began to serve the food, a (fictitious) voice from heaven (raised by the demon Kālaketu himself) said, "Up, up, Brahmans! and return to your homes. Taste not this food; it is most harmful. The dishes include the flesh of the Brahmans." Up rose all the Brahmans believing the ethereal voice. The king lost his nerve; his mind was bewildered with infatuation. As fate would have it, he could not utter a word. (1–4)

दो०—बोले बिप्र सकोप तब नहिं कछु कीन्ह बिचार ।
जाइ निसाचर होहु नृप मूढ़ सहित परिवार ॥ १७३ ॥

Then exclaimed the Brahmans in wrath, regardless of consequences, "O foolish king, go and take birth in the demon's form, you and all your family. (173)

चौ०—छत्रबंधु तैं बिप्र बोलाई । घालै लिए सहित समुदाई ॥
ईस्वर राखा धरम हमारा । जैहसि तैं समेत परिवारा ॥ १ ॥
संबत मध्य नास तव होऊ । जलदाता न रहिहि कुल कोऊ ॥
नृप सुनि श्राप बिकल अति त्रासा । भै बहोरि बर गिरा अकासा ॥ २ ॥
बिप्रहु श्राप बिचारि न दीन्हा । नहिं अपराध भूप कछु कीन्हा ॥
चकित बिप्र सब सुनि नभबानी । भूप गयउ जहँ भोजन खानी ॥ ३ ॥
तहँ न असन नहिं बिप्र सुआरा । फिरेउ राउ मन सोच अपारा ॥
सब प्रसंग महिसुरन्ह सुनाई । त्रसित परेउ अवनीं अकुलाई ॥ ४ ॥

"O vile Kṣatriya! inviting the Brahmans you were out to ruin them with their families. But God has preserved our sanctity; it is you and your race that are undone. In the course of a year you shall perish; and not a soul shall be left in your family to offer water to gratify your spirit." Hearing the curse the king was sore stricken with fear. Again, a voice was heard from heaven, "O holy Brahmans, you have uttered this curse without careful thought; the king has committed no crime." The Brahmans were

astounded when they heard the ethereal voice. The king hastened to the kitchen. There was neither any food there nor the Brahman cook. The king returned in deep thought. He related the whole story to the Brahmans and threw himself on the ground frantic with fear. (1–4)

दो०—भूपति भावी मिटइ नहिं जदपि न दूषन तोर ।
किएँ अन्यथा होइ नहिं बिप्रश्राप अति घोर ॥ १७४ ॥

"Even though you are guiltless, O king, what is inevitable fails not. A Brahman's curse is very terrible; no amount of effort can counteract it." (174)

चौ०—अस कहि सब महिदेव सिधाए । समाचार पुरलोगन्ह पाए ॥
सोचहिं दूषन दैवहि देहीं । बिरचत हंस काग किय जेहीं ॥ १ ॥
उपरोहितहि भवन पहुँचाई । असुर तापसहि खबरि जनाई ॥
तेहिं खल जहँ तहँ पत्र पठाए । सजि सजि सेन भूप सब धाए ॥ २ ॥
घेरेन्हि नगर निसान बजाई । बिबिध भाँति नित होइ लराई ॥
जूझे सकल सुभट करि करनी । बंधु समेत परेउ नृप धरनी ॥ ३ ॥
सत्यकेतु कुल कोउ नहिं बाँचा । बिप्रश्राप किमि होइ असाँचा ॥
रिपु जिति सब नृप नगर बसाई । निज पुर गवने जय जसु पाई ॥ ४ ॥

So saying, all the Brahmans dispersed. When the people of the city received the news, they were much perturbed and began to blame Providence, who had begun upon a swan and produced a crow instead. Conveying the priest to his house, the demon (Kālaketu) communicated the tidings to the hermit. The wretch in his turn despatched letters in all directions and a host of princes hastened with their troops martially arrayed and, beating their kettledrums, beleaguered the city. Every day battles were fought in diverse forms. All his champions fought valiantly and fell. And the king with his brother bit the dust. Not one of Satyaketu's family survived; a Brahman's curse can never fail. Having vanquished the foe and re-inhabiting the city all the chiefs returned to their own capitals enriched with victory and fame. (1–4)

दो०—भरद्वाज सुनु जाहि जब होइ बिधाता बाम ।
धूरि मेरुसम जनक जम ताहि ब्यालसम दाम ॥ १७५ ॥

Listen, O Bharadwāja: whosoever incurs the displeasure of heaven, for him a grain of dust becomes vast as Mount Meru, a father becomes frightful as Yama (the god of death) and every rope a snake. (175)

चौ०—काल पाइ मुनि सुनु सोइ राजा । भयउ निसाचर सहित समाजा ॥
दस सिर ताहि बीस भुजदंडा । रावन नाम बीर बरिबंडा ॥ १ ॥
भूप अनुज अरिमर्दन नामा । भयउ सो कुंभकरन बलधामा ॥
सचिव जो रहा धरमरुचि जासू । भयउ बिमात्र बंधु लघु तासू ॥ २ ॥
नाम बिभीषन जेहि जग जाना । बिष्नुभगत बिग्यान निधाना ॥
रहे जे सुत सेवक नृप केरे । भए निसाचर घोर घनेरे ॥ ३ ॥

कामरूप खल जिनस अनेका । कुटिल भयंकर बिगत बिबेका ॥
कृपा रहित हिंसक सब पापी । बरनि न जाहिं बिस्व परितापी ॥ ४ ॥

O sage, in due time, I tell you, this king, with his family, was born as a demon. He had ten heads and twenty arms. His name was Rāvaṇa; he was a formidable hero. The king's younger brother, Arimardana by name, became the powerful Kumbhakarṇa. His minister, who was known as Dharmaruchi, became Rāvaṇa's younger half-brother, Vibhīṣaṇa by name, who is known to the whole world as a devotee of God Viṣṇu and a repository of wisdom. And the king's sons and servants, they were born a fierce demon crew. These wretches could take any shape they liked and belonged to various orders. They were all wicked, monstrous and devoid of sense and were ruthless, bloody and sinful. They were a torment to all creation beyond what words can tell.

(1—4)

दो०—उपजे जदपि पुलस्त्यकुल पावन अमल अनूप ।
तदपि महीसुर श्राप बस भए सकल अघरूप ॥ १७६ ॥

Even though they were born in the incomparably pure and holy line of the sage Pulastya, yet, on account of the Brahman's curse, they were all embodiments of sin.

(176)

चौ०—कीन्ह बिबिध तप तीनिहुँ भाई । परम उग्र नहिं बरनि सो जाई ॥
गयउ निकट तप देखि बिधाता । मागहु बर प्रसन्न मैं ताता ॥ १ ॥
करि बिनती पद गहि दससीसा । बोलेउ बचन सुनहु जगदीसा ॥
हम काहू के मरहिं न मारें । बानर मनुज जाति दुइ बारें ॥ २ ॥
एवमस्तु तुम्ह बड़ तप कीन्हा । मैं ब्रह्माँ मिलि तेहि बर दीन्हा ॥
पुनि प्रभु कुंभकरन पहिं गयऊ । तेहि बिलोकि मन बिसमय भयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
जौं एहिं खल नित करब अहारू । होइहि सब उजारि संसारू ॥
सारद प्रेरि तासु मति फेरी । मागेसि नीद मास षट केरी ॥ ४ ॥

All the three brothers practised austerities of various kinds, terrible beyond all description. Seeing their penance the Creator drew nigh and said to the eldest of them, "Ask a boon, dear son." The ten-headed Rāvaṇa suppliantly clasped his feet and addressed to him the following words, "Listen, O lord of the universe: my prayer is that I should die at the hands of none save monkeys and men." "So be it; you have done great penance." This was the boon Brahmā and I granted to him (said Śiva). The Creator then approached Kumbhakarṇa and was astonished to see his gigantic form. Brahmā said to himself, "Should this wretch have his daily repast, the whole world will be laid waste." So Brahmā directed Śāradā, who changed his mind. Accordingly the demon asked for continued sleep, extending over six months. (1—4)

दो०—गए बिभीषन पास पुनि कहेउ पुत्र बर मागु ।
तेहिं मागेउ भगवंत पद कमल अमल अनुरागु ॥ १७७ ॥

Last of all Brahmā went up to Vibhīṣaṇa and said, "Ask a boon, my son." He asked for pure love for the lotus feet of the Lord. (177)

चौ०—तिन्हहि देइ बर ब्रह्म सिधाए । हरषित ते अपने गृह आए ॥
मय तनुजा मंदोदरि नामा । परम सुंदरी नारि ललामा ॥ १ ॥
सोइ मयँ दीन्हि रावनहि आनी । होइहि जातुधानपति जानी ॥
हरषित भयउ नारि भलि पाई । पुनि दोउ बंधु बिआहेसि जाई ॥ २ ॥
गिरि त्रिकूट एक सिंधु मझारी । बिधि निर्मित दुर्गम अति भारी ॥
सोइ मय दानवँ बहुरि सँवारा । कनक रचित मनिभवन अपारा ॥ ३ ॥
भोगावति जसि अहिकुल बासा । अमरावति जसि सक्रनिवासा ॥
तिन्ह तें अधिक रम्य अति बंका । जग बिख्यात नाम तेहि लंका ॥ ४ ॥

Having granted them boons Brahmā went away, while they returned to their home rejoicing. The demon Maya had a daughter, Mandodarī by name, who was exceedingly beautiful, a jewel of womankind. Maya brought and made her over to Rāvaṇa, knowing that the latter was going to become the lord of the demons. Delighted at having obtained such a good wife, Rāvaṇa next went and married his two brothers. On a three-peaked mountain called Trikūṭa in the middle of the ocean there stood a very large fortress built by Brahmā himself. The demon Maya (who was a great architect) renovated it. It contained numberless palaces of gold and jewels, and was more beautiful and charming than Bhogāvatī (the capital of Pātāla, the nethermost region in the core of the globe), the city of the serpents, and Amarāvatī, the capital of Indra (the lord of paradise). It was known throughout the world by the name of Lankā. (1—4)

दो०—खाईं सिंधु गभीर अति चारिहुँ दिसि फिरि आव ।
कनक कोट मनिखचित दृढ़ बरनि न जाइ बनाव ॥ १७८ (क) ॥
हरि प्रेरित जेहिं कलप जोइ जातुधानपति होइ ।
सूर प्रतापी अतुलबल दल समेत बस सोइ ॥ १७८ (ख) ॥

The ocean surrounded it on all sides as a very deep moat. It had a strong fortification wall built of gold and jewels, the architectural beauty of which defied description. Whoever was preordained by Śrī Hari to be the chief of the demons in a particular cycle, that illustrious hero of incomparable might lived there with his army. (178 A-B)

चौ०—रहे तहाँ निसिचर भट भारे । ते सब सुरन्ह समर संघारे ॥
अब तहँ रहहिं सक्र के प्रेरे । रच्छक कोटि जच्छपति केरे ॥ १ ॥
दसमुख कतहुँ खबरि असि पाई । सेन साजि गढ़ घेरेसि जाई ॥
देखि बिकट भट बड़ि कटकाई । जच्छ जीव लै गए पराई ॥ २ ॥
फिरि सब नगर दसानन देखा । गयउ सोच सुख भयउ बिसेषा ॥
सुंदर सहज अगम अनुमानी । कीन्हि तहाँ रावन रजधानी ॥ ३ ॥

जेहि जस जोग बाँटि गृह दीन्हे । सुखी सकल रजनीचर कीन्हे ॥
एक बार कुबेर पर धावा । पुष्पक जान जीति लै आवा ॥ ४ ॥

Great demon warriors had been living there. They were all exterminated in battle by the gods. Now under Indra's commission it was occupied by a garrison consisting of ten million guards of Kubera (the chief of the Yakṣas). Having obtained this news from some quarter Rāvana marshalled his army and besieged the fortress. Seeing his vast force of fierce warriors, the Yakṣas fled for their lives. Thereupon Rāvaṇa surveyed the whole city; he was much pleased with what he saw and all his anxiety (about a suitable capital) was gone. Perceiving that the city was naturally beautiful and accessible for others, Rāvaṇa fixed his capital there. By assigning quarters to his followers according to their several deserts he made them all happy. On one occasion he led an expedition against Kubera and carried away his aerial car known by the name of Puṣpaka as a trophy. (1—4)

दो०—कौतुकहीं कैलास पुनि लीन्हेसि जाइ उठाइ ।
मनहुँ तौलि निज बाहुबल चला बहुत सुख पाइ ॥ १७९ ॥

Again, in a sportive mood he went and lifted Mount Kailāsa and, thereby testing as it were the might of his arms, returned most jubilant. (179)

चौ०—सुख संपति सुत सेन सहाई । जय प्रताप बल बुद्धि बड़ाई ॥
नित नूतन सब बाढ़त जाई । जिमि प्रतिलाभ लोभ अधिकाई ॥ १ ॥
अतिबल कुंभकरन अस भ्राता । जेहि कहुँ नहिं प्रतिभट जग जाता ॥
करइ पान सोवइ षट मासा । जागत होइ तिहूँ पुर त्रासा ॥ २ ॥
जौं दिन प्रति अहार कर सोई । बिस्व बेगि सब चौपट होई ॥
समर धीर नहिं जाइ बखाना । तेहि सम अमित बीर बलवाना ॥ ३ ॥
बारिदनाद जेठ सुत तासू । भट महुँ प्रथम लीक जग जासू ॥
जेहि न होइ रन सनमुख कोई । सुरपुर नितहिं परावन होई ॥ ४ ॥

His happiness and prosperity, the number of his sons, his army and his allies, his victories and glory, his might, wisdom and fame grew from more to more every day even as avarice grows with each new gain. He had a stalwart brother, like Kumbhakarna, a rival to whom was never born in this world. Drinking his fill he remained buried in sleep for six months; and at his waking the three worlds trembled. Were he to take his meals every day, the whole universe would soon have been ruined. He was unspeakably staunch in fight and there were numberless brave warriors who could be compared with him. Rāvana's eldest son was Meghanāda, who ranked foremost among the champions of the world. Before him none could stand in battle. Due to him there was a stampede in the city of the immortals every day. (1—4)

दो०—कुमुख अकंपन कुलिसरद धूमकेतु अतिकाय ।
एक एक जग जीति सक ऐसे सुभट निकाय ॥ १८० ॥

There were many more champions such as the hideous Kumukha, the intrepid Akampana, Kuliśarada with teeth like thunderbolts, the fiery Dhūmaketu and the gigantic Atikāya, each one of whom was able to subdue the whole world. (180)

चौ०—कामरूप जानहिं सब माया । सपनेहुँ जिन्ह कें धरम न दाया ॥
दसमुख बैठ सभाँ एक बारा । देखि अमित आपन परिवारा ॥ १ ॥
सुत समूह जन परिजन नाती । गनै को पार निसाचर जाती ॥
सेन बिलोकि सहज अभिमानी । बोला बचन क्रोध मद सानी ॥ २ ॥
सुनहु सकल रजनीचर जूथा । हमरे बैरी बिबुध बरूथा ॥
ते सनमुख नहिं करहिं लराई । देखि सबल रिपु जाहिं पराई ॥ ३ ॥
तेन्ह कर मरन एक बिधि होई । कहउँ बुझाइ सुनहु अब सोई ॥
द्विजभोजन मख होम सराधा । सब कै जाइ करहु तुम्ह बाधा ॥ ४ ॥

Taking form at will, they were skilled in all forms of demoniac Māyā (deceit); they never thought of piety or compassion even in dream. One day the ten-headed Rāvaṇa was seated in court and reviewed his innumerable retainers, hosts of sons and grandsons, relatives and servants, troops of demons, more than anyone could count. On seeing the host the naturally proud Rāvaṇa spoke words full of wrath and arrogance: "Listen, all demon troops: the host of heaven are my enemies. They never dare to stand up in open fight, but flee away at the sight of a powerful adversary. There is only one way of causing their death, which I tell you in detail; now listen to it. Go and prevent the feasting of Brahmans, the performance of sacrifices, the pouring of oblations into the sacred fire, the ceremony of Śrāddha (offering food etc. to a departed soul) and all other religious functions. (1—4).

दो०—छुधा छीन बलहीन सुर सहजेहिं मिलिहहिं आइ ।
तब मारिहउँ कि छाड़िहउँ भली भाँति अपनाइ ॥ १८१ ॥

"Emaciated with starvation and rendered weak, the gods will automatically surrender to me. Then I will see whether I should kill them or let them go after subjecting them perfectly to my will." (181)

चौ०—मेघनाद कहुँ पुनि हँकरावा । दीन्ही सिख बलु बयरु बढ़ावा ॥
जे सुर समर धीर बलवाना । जिन्ह कें लरिबे कर अभिमाना ॥ १ ॥
तिन्हहि जीति रन आनेसु बाँधी । उठि सुत पितु अनुसासन काँधी ॥
एहि बिधि सबही अग्या दीन्ही । आपुनु चलेउ गदा कर लीन्ही ॥ २ ॥
चलत दसानन डोलति अवनी । गर्जत गर्भ स्रवहिं सुर रवनी ॥
रावन आवत सुनेउ सकोहा । देवन्ह तके मेरु गिरि खोहा ॥ ३ ॥
दिगपालन्ह के लोक सुहाए । सूने सकल दसानन पाए ॥
पुनि पुनि सिंघनाद करि भारी । देइ देवतन्ह गारि पचारी ॥ ४ ॥
रन मद मत्त फिरइ जग धावा । प्रतिभट खोजत कतहुँ न पावा ॥
रबि ससि पवन बरुन धनधारी । अगिनि काल जम सब अधिकारी ॥ ५ ॥

किंनर सिद्ध मनुज सुर नागा । हठि सबही के पंथहिं लागा ॥
ब्रह्मसृष्टि जहँ लगि तनुधारी । दसमुख बसबर्ती नर नारी ॥ ६ ॥
आयसु करहिं सकल भयभीता । नवहिं आइ नित चरन बिनीता ॥ ७ ॥

Then Rāvaṇa sent for Meghanāda and admonished him, inciting him to greater strength and hostility. "The gods who are staunch in battle, powerful and proud of their fighting skill, you should conquer in battle and bring them in chains." The son got up and bowed to the commands of his father. In this way Rāvaṇa ordered all and himself sallied forth, club in hand. Even as the ten-headed Rāvaṇa marched, the earth shook and at his thundering call the spouses of gods miscarried. Hearing of Rāvaṇa's angry approach the gods themselves sought the caves of Mount Sumeru. When the ten-faced Rāvaṇa invaded the beautiful realms of the guardians of the ten quarters, he found them all desolate. Again and again he roared loudly like a lion and, challenging the gods to battle, scoffed at them. Mad with lust of blood he traversed the whole world in search of a combatant; but nowhere could he find anyone. The sun-god, the moon-god, the wind-god, the god of water, the gods of wealth and fire, the gods of time and death and all other gods entrusted with the governance of the world, Kinnaras, Siddhas, men, gods and Nāgas, all were wilfully harassed by him. All embodied beings in the creation of Brahmā, whether men or women, submitted to Rāvaṇa's will. All did his bidding out of fear and always bowed suppliantly at his feet. (1—7)

दो०—भुजबल बिस्व बस्य करि राखेसि कोउ न सुतंत्र ।
मंडलीक मनि रावन राज करइ निज मंत्र ॥ १८२ (क) ॥
देव जच्छ गंधर्ब नर किंनर नाग कुमारि ।
जीति बरीं निज बाहुबल बहु सुंदर बर नारि ॥ १८२ (ख) ॥

By his mighty arm he subdued the whole universe and left no one independent. The king of kings, Rāvana, ruled according to his own will. He won by the might of his arms and wedded daughters of gods, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, human beings, Kinnaras and Nāgas and many other beautiful and excellent dames. (182 A.B).

चौ०—इंद्रजीत सन जो कछु कहेऊ । सो सब जनु पहिलेहिं करि रहेऊ ॥
प्रथमहिं जिन्ह कहुँ आयसु दीन्हा । तिन्ह कर चरित सुनहु जो कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
देखत भीमरूप सब पापी । निसिचर निकर देव परितापी ॥
करहिं उपद्रव असुर निकाया । नाना रूप धरहिं करि माया ॥ २ ॥
जेहि बिधि होइ धर्म निर्मूला । सो सब करहिं बेद प्रतिकूला ॥
जेहिं जेहिं देस धेनु द्विज पावहिं । नगर गाउँ पुर आगि लगावहिं ॥ ३ ॥
सुभ आचरन कतहुँ नहिं होई । देव बिप्र गुरु मान न कोई ॥
नहिं हरिभगति जग्य तप ग्याना । सपनेहुँ सुनिअ न बेद पुराना ॥ ४ ॥

Whatever Rāvaṇa told Indrajit to do was done by him sooner as it were than the former uttered the command. Now hear what they did who had been ordered by him even earlier. The whole demon crew, sinful at heart and of

terrible aspect, were the torment of heaven. Roaming at night, they did outrages of various kinds and assumed diverse forms through their delusive power. They acted in every way contrary to Veda and did everything in their power to eradicate religion. Wherever they found a cow or a Brahman they set fire to that city, town or village. Virtuous acts were nowhere to be seen. No one paid any respect to the gods, the Brahmans and the spiritual preceptor. There was no devotion to Śrī Hari, no sacrificial performances, no austerities and no spiritual wisdom. No one would ever dream of listening to the Vedas or the Purāṇas. (1–4)

छं०—जप जोग बिरागा तप मख भागा श्रवन सुनइ दससीसा ।
आपुनु उठि धावइ रहै न पावइ धरि सब घालइ खीसा ॥
अस भ्रष्ट अचारा भा संसारा धर्म सुनिअ नहिं काना ।
तेहि बहु बिधि त्रासइ देस निकासइ जो कह बेद पुराना ॥

If ever any talk of Japa (muttering of sacred formulas), Yoga (subjugation of mind), dispassion, penance or of oblations to gods in a sacrifice entered Rāvaṇa's ears he would at once be on his feet and run to stop them. He would allow nothing of these and would destroy everything he laid his hands upon. There was such corruption in the world that no talk of piety could be heard anywhere. Whoever recited the Vedas or the Puranas was intimidated in manifold ways and sent into exile.

सो०—बरनि न जाइ अनीति घोर निसाचर जो करहिं ।
हिंसा पर अति प्रीति तिन्ह के पापहि कवनि मिति ॥ १८३ ॥

The terrible outrages the demons did beggar description. There is no limit to the evil-doings of those who hold violence most dear to their heart. (183)

[PAUSE 6 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—बाढ़े खल बहु चोर जुआरा । जे लंपट परधन परदारा ॥
मानहिं मातु पिता नहिं देवा । साधुन्ह सन करवावहिं सेवा ॥ १ ॥
जिन्ह के यह आचरन भवानी । ते जानेहु निसिचर सब प्रानी ॥
अतिसय देखि धर्म कै ग्लानी । परम सभीत धरा अकुलानी ॥ २ ॥
गिरि सरि सिंधु भार नहिं मोही । जस मोहि गरुअ एक परद्रोही ॥
सकल धर्म देखइ बिपरीता । कहि न सकइ रावन भय भीता ॥ ३ ॥
धेनु रूप धरि हृदयँ बिचारी । गई तहाँ जहँ सुर मुनि झारी ॥
निज संताप सुनाएसि रोई । काहू तें कछु काज न होई ॥ ४ ॥

The number of villains, thieves and gamblers and of those who coveted others' wealth and wives swelled to a great extent. People honoured not their parents and gods and exacted service from pious souls. Those who act in this way, Bhavānī, know all such creatures as demons. Perceiving the supreme disrespect for religion Earth was extremely alarmed and perturbed. "The weight of mountains, rivers and oceans," she said to herself, "is not so oppressive

to me as of him who is malevolent to others." She saw all goodness perverted; yet for fear of Rāvana she could not utter a word. After great deliberation she took the form of a cow and went to the spot where all gods and sages were in hiding. With tears in her eyes she told them her sufferings; but none of them could be of any help to her. (1—4)

छं०—सुर मुनि गंधर्बा मिलि करि सर्बा गे बिरंचि के लोका ।
सँग गोतनुधारी भूमि बिचारी परम बिकल भय सोका ॥
ब्रह्माँ सब जाना मन अनुमाना मोर कछू न बसाई ।
जा करि तैं दासी सो अबिनासी हमरेउ तोर सहाई ॥

The gods, sages and Gandharvas (celestial songsters), all repaired to Brahmā's abode; with them was poor Earth in the form of a cow grievously stricken with fear and grief. Brahmā came to know everything; and realizing in his heart of heart his inability to help her, he said, "The immortal Lord whose servant you are will be my help as well as yours."

सो०—धरनि धरहि मन धीर कह बिरंचि हरिपद सुमिरु ।
जानत जन की पीर प्रभु भंजिहि दारुन बिपति ॥ १८४ ॥

"Have patience, Earth," said Brahmā, "and fix your mind on the feet of Śrī Hari. The Lord knows the distress of His servants and will put an end to your terrible suffering." (184)

चौ०—बैठे सुर सब करहिं बिचारा । कहँ पाइअ प्रभु करिअ पुकारा ॥
पुर बैकुंठ जान कह कोई । कोउ कह पयनिधि बस प्रभु सोई ॥ १ ॥
जाके हृदयँ भगति जसि प्रीती । प्रभु तहँ प्रगट सदा तेहिं रीती ॥
तेहिं समाज गिरिजा मैं रहेऊँ । अवसर पाइ बचन एक कहेऊँ ॥ २ ॥
हरि ब्यापक सर्बत्र समाना । प्रेम तें प्रगट होहिं मैं जाना ॥
देस काल दिसि बिदिसिहु माहीं । कहहु सो कहाँ जहाँ प्रभु नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
अग जगमय सब रहित बिरागी । प्रेम तें प्रभु प्रगटइ जिमि आगी ॥
मोर बचन सब के मन माना । साधु साधु करि ब्रह्म बखाना ॥ ४ ॥

All the gods sat in counsel: "Where can we find the Lord, so that we may appeal to Him?" Someone suggested that they should go to Vaikuntha. Another said, "The Lord has His abode in the ocean of milk." The Lord always manifests Himself in response to the devotion and love one cherishes in one's heart. Girijā, I too happened to be in that assembly and took occasion to put in a word: "For aught I know Śrī Hari is present everywhere alike and is revealed only by love. Tell Me any place, time or quarter of the heaven where the Lord is not. Having taken the form of all creation, both animate and inanimate, He is yet destitute of everything and passionless; He is revealed by love even as fire is manifested by friction." My words found favour with all and Brahma applauded me saying, "Well said, well said !" (1—4)

दो०—सुनि बिरंचि मन हरष तन पुलकि नयन बह नीर ।
अस्तुति करत जोरि कर सावधान मतिधीर ॥ १८५ ॥

Brahma was glad at heart to hear My words the hair on his body bristled and tears flowed from his eyes. Recovering himself, the stable-minded Brahmā joined his palms and prayed:— (185)

छं०—जय जय सुरनायक जन सुखदायक प्रनतपाल भगवंता ।
गो द्विज हितकारी जय असुरारी सिंधुसुता प्रिय कंता ॥
पालन सुर धरनी अद्भुत करनी मरम न जानइ कोई ।
जो सहज कृपाला दीनदयाला करउ अनुग्रह सोई ॥ १ ॥
जय जय अबिनासी सब घट बासी ब्यापक परमानंदा ।
अबिगत गोतीतं चरित पुनीतं मायारहित मुकुंदा ॥
जेहि लागि बिरागी अति अनुरागी बिगतमोह मुनिबृंदा ।
निसि बासर ध्यावहिं गुनगन गावहिं जयति सच्चिदानंदा ॥ २ ॥
जेहिं सृष्टि उपाई त्रिबिध बनाई संग सहाय न दूजा ।
सो करउ अघारी चिंत हमारी जानिअ भगति न पूजा ॥
जो भव भय भंजन मुनि मन रंजन गंजन बिपति बरूथा ।
मन बच क्रम बानी छाड़ि सयानी सरन सकल सुर जूथा ॥ ३ ॥
सारद श्रुति सेषा रिषय असेषा जा कहुँ कोउ नहिं जाना ।
जेहि दीन पिआरे बेद पुकारे द्रवउ सो श्रीभगवाना ॥
भव बारिधि मंदर सब बिधि सुंदर गुनमंदिर सुखपुंजा ।
मुनि सिद्ध सकल सुर परम भयातुर नमत नाथ पद कंजा ॥ ४ ॥

Glory, all glory to You, O Lord of immortals. O delight of the devotees, O protector of the suppliant, O benefactor of cows and the Brahmans, O slayer of demons, O beloved consort of Lakṣmī (daughter of the ocean), glory to You. O guardian of gods and the earth, mysterious are Thy ways: their secret is known to none. Let Him who is benevolent by nature and compassionate to the humble show His grace. Glory, all glory to the immortal Lord Mukunda (the bestower of salvation and love), who resides in all hearts, is supreme bliss personified, who is omnipresent, unknowable, and supersensuous, whose acts are holy and who is beyond the veil of Māya (illusion). Glory to Him who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss combined, who is most lovingly meditated upon day and night and whose praises are sung by multitudes of sages who are full of dispassion and entirely free from infatuation. Let the Slayer of the sinful Agha bestow His care on us,—He who brought forth the threefold creation (viz., that which is dominated by Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, viz., gods, men and demons) without anyone else to assist Him; we know neither

devotion nor worship. He who disperses the fear of transmigration, delights the mind of sages and puts an end to hosts of calamities, we gods betake ourselves to Him in thought, word and deed, giving up our wonted cleverness. The Lord, who is known neither to Śāradā (the goddess of learning), nor to the Vedas, nor again to Śeṣa (the serpent-god), nor to any of the sages, who as the Vedas proclaim loves the lowly, let Him be moved to pity. The sages, Siddhas (a class of celestials naturally endowed with supernatural powers) and all gods, grievously stricken with fear, bow at the lotus feet of the Lord who serves as Mount Mandara for churning the ocean of worldly existence, who is charming in every way, who is an abode of virtues and an embodiment of bliss. (1—4)

दो०—जानि सभय सुर भूमि सुनि बचन समेत सनेह ।
गगनगिरा गंभीर भइ हरनि सोक संदेह ॥ १८६ ॥

Knowing that the gods and Earth were terror-stricken and hearing their loving entreaties, a deep voice came from heaven, which removed all their doubt and anxiety: (186)

चौ०—जनि डरपहु मुनि सिद्ध सुरेसा । तुम्हहि लागि धरिहउँ नर बेसा ॥
अंसन्ह सहित मनुज अवतारा । लेहउँ दिनकर बंस उदारा ॥ १ ॥
कस्यप अदिति महातप कीन्हा । तिन्ह कहुँ मैं पूरब बर दीन्हा ॥
ते दसरथ कौसल्या रूपा । कोसलपुरीं प्रगट नरभूपा ॥ २ ॥
तिन्ह कें गृह अवतरिहउँ जाई । रघुकुलतिलक सो चारिउ भाई ॥
नारद बचन सत्य सब करिहउँ । परम सक्ति समेत अवतरिहउँ ॥ ३ ॥
हरिहउँ सकल भूमि गरुआई । निर्भय होहु देव समुदाई ॥
गगन ब्रह्मबानी सुनि काना । तुरत फिरे सुर हृदय जुड़ाना ॥ ४ ॥
तब ब्रह्माँ धरनिहि समुझावा । अभय भई भरोस जियँ आवा ॥ ५ ॥

"Fear not, O sages, Siddhas and Indra (the chief of gods); for your sake I will assume the form of a human being. In the glorious solar race I shall be born as a human being along with My part manifestations. The sage Kaśyapa and his wife Aditi did severe penance; to them I have already vouchsafed a boon. They have appeared in the city of Ayodhyā as rulers of men in the form of Daśaratha and Kausalyā. In their house I shall take birth in the form of four brothers, the ornament of Raghu's line. I shall justify all that was uttered by Nārada and shall descend with My Supreme Energy. In this way I shall relieve the earth of all its burden; be fearless, O gods." As the divine voice from heaven reached the gods' ears they returned forthwith with their heart soothed. Then Brahmā admonished Earth, who was rid of all fear and felt reassured in her heart. (1—5)

दो०—निज लोकहि बिरंचि गे देवन्ह इहइ सिखाइ ।
बानर तनु धरि धरि महि हरि पद सेवहु जाइ ॥ १८७ ॥

Then Brahmā proceeded to his realm after thus instructing the gods: "Assuming the form of monkeys you go to the earth and adore the feet of Śrī Hari." (187)

चौ०—गए देव सब निज निज धामा । भूमि सहित मन कहुँ बिश्रामा ॥
जो कछु आयसु ब्रह्माँ दीन्हा । हरषे देव बिलंब न कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
बनचर देह धरी छिति माहीं । अतुलित बल प्रताप तिन्ह पाहीं ॥
गिरि तरु नख आयुध सब बीरा । हरि मारग चितवहिं मतिधीरा ॥ २ ॥
गिरि कानन जहँ तहँ भरि पूरी । रहे निज निज अनीक रचि रूरी ॥
यह सब रुचिर चरित मैं भाषा । अब सो सुनहु जो बीचहिं राखा ॥ ३ ॥
अवधपुरीं रघुकुलमनि राऊ । बेद बिदित तेहि दसरथ नाऊँ ॥
धरम धुरंधर गुननिधि ग्यानी । हृदयँ भगति मति सारँगपानी ॥ ४ ॥

All the gods went to their several abodes along with Earth; they all felt relieved in their heart. And the gods were delighted to receive the orders that Brahmā gave, and lost no time in carrying them out. They took the form of monkeys on earth; their might and glory were incomparable. They were all brave and had mountains, trees and nails for their weapons. Resolute of mind, they awaited the advent of Śrī Hari, swarming on mountains and in woods wherever they liked and dividing themselves into gallant troops of their own. I have related to you all this interesting account; now hear that which was interrupted before. In the city of Ayodhyā there ruled a king who was a jewel of Raghu's race; he was called Daśaratha, a name which is familiar in the Vedas. He was a champion of virtue, a repository of good qualities and a man of wisdom; he was a sincere devotee of God Viṣṇu (the wielder of the Śārṅga bow) and his mind was also set on Him. (1–4)

दो०—कौसल्यादि नारि प्रिय सब आचरन पुनीत ।
पति अनुकूल प्रेम दृढ़ हरि पद कमल बिनीत ॥ १८८ ॥

Kausalyā and his other beloved consorts were all of holy life; humble and devoted to their lord, they had a strong attachment to the lotus feet of Śrī Hari. (188)

चौ०—एक बार भूपति मन माहीं । भै गलानि मोरें सुत नाहीं ॥
गुर गृह गयउ तुरत महिपाला । चरन लागि करि बिनय बिसाला ॥ १ ॥
निज दुख सुख सब गुरहि सुनायउ । कहि बसिष्ठ बहु बिधि समुझायउ ॥
धरहु धीर होइहहिं सुत चारी । त्रिभुवन बिदित भगत भय हारी ॥ २ ॥
सृंगी रिषिहि बसिष्ठ बोलावा । पुत्रकाम सुभ जग्य करावा ॥
भगति सहित मुनि आहुति दीन्हें । प्रगटे अगिनि चरू कर लीन्हें ॥ ३ ॥
जो बसिष्ठ कछु हृदयँ बिचारा । सकल काजु भा सिद्ध तुम्हारा ॥
यह हबि बाँटि देहु नृप जाई । जथा जोग जेहि भाग बनाई ॥ ४ ॥

One day the king was sad at heart that he had no son. He hastened to his preceptor's residence and, falling at his feet, made many entreaties. He told the Guru all his joys and sorrows; the sage Vasiṣṭha comforted him in many ways and said, "Take heart and wait; you will have four sons, who will be known throughout the three worlds and will rid the devotees of their fears." Then

Vasistha summoned the sage Śṛṅgī and had a noble sacrifice performed by him for the birth of a son to the king. When the sage devoutly offered oblations into the sacred fire, the fire-god appeared with an offering of rice boiled with milk in his hand. Said the fire-god, "Whatever Vasiṣṭha has contemplated for you that object is fully accomplished. Take this oblation, O king, and divide it in such proportions as you think fit." (1—4)

दो०—तब अदृस्य भए पावक सकल सभहि समुझाइ ।
परमानंद मगन नृप हरष न हृदयँ समाइ ॥ १८९ ॥

The fire-god then disappeared after telling the whole assembly of what was to be done. The king was transported with ecstasy and could not contain himself for joy. (189)

चौ०—तबहिं रायँ प्रिय नारि बोलाईं । कौसल्यादि तहाँ चलि आईं ॥
अर्ध भाग कौसल्यहि दीन्हा । उभय भाग आधे कर कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
कैकेई कहँ नृप सो दयऊ । रह्यो सो उभय भाग पुनि भयऊ ॥
कौसल्या कैकेई हाथ धरि । दीन्ह सुमित्रहि मन प्रसन्न करि ॥ २ ॥
एहि बिधि गर्भसहित सब नारी । भईं हृदयँ हरषित सुख भारी ॥
जा दिन तें हरि गर्भहिं आए । सकल लोक सुख संपति छाए ॥ ३ ॥
मंदिर महँ सब राजहिं रानीं । सोभा सील तेज की खानीं ॥
सुख जुत कछुक काल चलि गयऊ । जेहिं प्रभु प्रगट सो अवसर भयऊ ॥ ४ ॥

The king at once sent for his beloved consorts. When Kausalya and the other queens arrived there, he gave one half of the offering to Kausalyā and divided the other into two halves, one of which he gave to Kaikeyī. The remnant was again divided into two parts, which he placed in the hands of Kausalyā and Kaikeyī and after thus obtaining their approval handed both the shares to Sumitra. In this way all the queens became pregnant. They were all glad of heart and felt very happy. From the time Srī Hari found His way into the womb joy and prosperity reigned in all the worlds. In the palace shone the queens, who were all mines of beauty, virtue and glory. Some time was thus happily spent, till the time arrived for the Lord to be revealed. (1—4)

दो०—जोग लगन ग्रह बार तिथि सकल भए अनुकूल ।
चर अरु अचर हर्षजुत राम जनम सुखमूल ॥ १९० ॥

The position of the sun and the moon, the zodiacal sign into which the sun had entered, the position of the seven other planets, the day of the week as well as the day of the lunar month, all these turned out to be propitious. And full of delight was all creation, animate and inanimate; for the birth of Śrī Rāma is the source of joy. (190)

चौ०—नौमी तिथि मधु मास पुनीता । सुकल पच्छ अभिजित हरिप्रीता ॥
मध्यदिवस अति सीत न घामा । पावन काल लोक बिश्रामा ॥ १ ॥

सीतल मंद सुरभि बह बाऊ । हरषित सुर संतन मन चाऊ ॥
बन कुसुमित गिरिगन मनिआरा । स्रवहिं सकल सरिताऽमृतधारा ॥ २ ॥
सो अवसर बिरंचि जब जाना । चले सकल सुर साजि बिमाना ॥
गगन बिमल संकुल सुर जूथा । गावहिं गुन गंधर्ब बरूथा ॥ ३ ॥
बरषहिं सुमन सुअंजुलि साजी । गहगहि गगन दुंदुभी बाजी ॥
अस्तुति करहिं नाग मुनि देवा । बहु बिधि लावहिं निज निज सेवा ॥ ४ ॥

It was the ninth day of the bright half of the sacred month of Chaitra; the moon had entered the asterism named Abhijit, which is so dear to Srī Hari. The sun was at its meridian; the day was neither cold nor hot. It was a holy time which gave rest to the whole world. A cool, soft and fragrant breeze was blowing. The gods were feeling exhilarated and the saints were bubbling with enthusiasm. The woods were full of blossoms, the mountains were resplendent with gems and every river flowed a stream of nectar. When Brahmā perceived that the time of Srī Rāma's birth had approached, all the gods came out with their aerial cars duly equipped. The bright heaven was crowded with their hosts and troops of Gandharvas chanted praises and rained down flowers placing them in their beautiful palms. The sky resounded with the beat of kettledrums. Nāgas, sages and gods offered praises and tendered their services in manifold ways. (1–4)

दो०—सुर समूह बिनती करि पहुँचे निज निज धाम ।
जगनिवास प्रभु प्रगटे अखिल लोक बिश्राम ॥ १९१ ॥

Having offered their praises the gods returned to their several abodes, when the Lord, the abode of the universe and the solace of all creation, manifested Himself. (191)

छं०—भए प्रगट कृपाला दीनदयाला कौसल्या हितकारी ।
हरषित महतारी मुनि मन हारी अद्भुत रूप बिचारी ॥
लोचन अभिरामा तनु घनस्यामा निज आयुध भुज चारी ।
भूषन बनमाला नयन बिसाला सोभासिंधु खरारी ॥ १ ॥
कह दुइ कर जोरी अस्तुति तोरी केहि बिधि करौं अनंता ।
माया गुन ग्यानातीत अमाना बेद पुरान भनंता ॥
करुना सुख सागर सब गुन आगर जेहि गावहिं श्रुति संता ।
सो मम हित लागी जन अनुरागी भयउ प्रगट श्रीकंता ॥ २ ॥
ब्रह्मांड निकाया निर्मित माया रोम रोम प्रति बेद कहै ।
मम उर सो बासी यह उपहासी सुनत धीर मति थिर न रहै ॥
उपजा जब ग्याना प्रभु मुसुकाना चरित बहुत बिधि कीन्ह चहै ।
कहि कथा सुहाई मातु बुझाई जेहि प्रकार सुत प्रेम लहै ॥ ३ ॥

माता पुनि बोली सो मति डोली तजहु तात यह रूपा ।
कीजै सिसुलीला अति प्रियसीला यह सुख परम अनूपा ॥
सुनि बचन सुजाना रोदन ठाना होइ बालक सुरभूपा ।
यह चरित जे गावहिं हरिपद पावहिं ते न परहिं भवकूपा ॥ ४ ॥

The gracious Lord, who is compassionate to the lowly and the benefactor of Kausalyā, appeared. The thought of His marvellous form, which stole the heart of sages, filled the mother with joy. His body was dark as a cloud, the delight of all eyes; in His four arms He bore His characteristic emblems (a conch-shell, a discus, a club and a lotus). Adorned with jewels and a garland of sylvan flowers and endowed with large eyes, the Slayer of the demon Khara was an ocean of beauty. Joining both her palms the mother said, "O infinite Lord, how can I praise You!. The Vedas as well as the Purāṇas declare You as transcending Māyā, beyond attributes, above knowledge and beyond all measure. He who is sung by the Vedas and holy men as an ocean of mercy and bliss and the repository of all virtues, the same Lord of Lakṣmī, the lover of His devotees, has revealed Himself for my good. The Vedas proclaim that every pore of Your body contains multitudes of universes brought forth by Māyā. That such a Lord stayed in my womb—this amusing story staggers the mind of even men of wisdom." When the revelation came upon the mother, the Lord smiled; He would perform many a sportive act. Therefore He exhorted her by telling her the charming account of her previous birth so that she might love Him as her own child. The mother's mind was changed; she spoke again, "Give up this superhuman form and indulge in childish sports, which are so dear to a mother's heart; the joy that comes from such sports in unequalled in every way." Hearing these words the all-wise Lord of immortals became an infant and began to cry. Those who sing this lay (says Tulasīdāsa) attain to the abode of Śrī Hari and never fall into the well of mundane existence.

(1—4)

दो०—बिप्र धेनु सुर संत हित लीन्ह मनुज अवतार ।
निज इच्छा निर्मित तनु माया गुन गो पार ॥ १९२ ॥

For the sake of Brahmans, cows, gods and saints, the Lord, who transcends Māyā and is beyond the three modes of Prakṛti (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) as well as beyond the reach of the senses, took birth as a man assuming a form which is a product of His own will.

(192)

चौ०—सुनि सिसु रुदन परम प्रिय बानी । संभ्रम चलि आईं सब रानी ॥
हरषित जहँ तहँ धाईं दासी । आनँद मगन सकल पुरबासी ॥ १ ॥
दसरथ पुत्रजन्म सुनि काना । मानहुँ ब्रह्मानंद समाना ॥
परम प्रेम मन पुलक सरीरा । चाहत उठन करत मति धीरा ॥ २ ॥
जाकर नाम सुनत सुभ होई । मोरें गृह आवा प्रभु सोई ॥
परमानंद पूरि मन राजा । कहा बोलाइ बजावहु बाजा ॥ ३ ॥
गुर बसिष्ठ कहँ गयउ हँकारा । आए द्विजन सहित नृपद्वारा ॥
अनुपम बालक देखेन्हि जाई । रूप रासि गुन कहि न सिराई ॥ ४ ॥

On hearing the most pleasing sound of the baby's cries all the queens came in a flurry. Maid-servants ran helter-skelter in great delight; all the people of the city were transported with joy. When the tidings of the birth of a son reached Daśaratha's ears he was drowned as it were in the ecstasy of absorption into Brahma. With a mind saturated with the highest love and with a body thrilling all over with joy he sought to rise, while attempting to recover his senses. "The same Lord, whose very Name brings blessings with It even when It reaches one's ears, has arrived at my house," he said to himself; and the thought filled his mind with supreme joy. Sending for musicians he said, "Play on your instruments." The preceptor Vasiṣṭha was also summoned and he called at the palace door, with a train of Brahmans. They all went and gazed upon the peerless babe, who was an embodiment of beauty and possessed excellences more than one could tell. (1—4)

दो०—नंदीमुख सराध करि जातकरम सब कीन्ह ।
हाटक धेनु बसन मनि नृप बिप्रन्ह कहँ दीन्ह ॥ १९३ ॥

After performing the Nāndīmukha Śrāddha* the king completed all the rites connected with the birth of a child and made gifts of gold, cows, raiment and jewels to the Brahmans, (193)

चौ०—ध्वज पताक तोरन पुर छावा । कहि न जाइ जेहि भाँति बनावा ॥
सुमनबृष्टि अकास तें होई । ब्रह्मानंद मगन सब लोई ॥ १ ॥
बृंद बृंद मिलि चलीं लोगाईं । सहज सिंगार किएँ उठि धाईं ॥
कनक कलस मंगल भरि थारा । गावत पैठहिं भूप दुआरा ॥ २ ॥
करि आरति नेवछावरि करहीं । बार बार सिसु चरनन्हि परहीं ॥
मागध सूत बंदिगन गायक । पावन गुन गावहिं रघुनायक ॥ ३ ॥
सर्बस दान दीन्ह सब काहूँ । जेहिं पावा राखा नहिं ताहूँ ॥
मृगमद चंदन कुंकुम कीचा । मची सकल बीथिन्ह बिच बीचा ॥ ४ ॥

The city was full of flags and banners and festal arches. It was decorated in a way which defies description. Showers of flowers dropped from heaven; everybody was rapt in the joy of absorption into Brahma. Women streamed forth in troops; they came running in their natural toilet. Carrying jars of gold and salvers full of auspicious articles, they entered the portals of the royal palace singing as they went along. Waving lights and passing offerings round and round over the child's head as an act of exorcism they threw themselves at the babe's feet again and again. Bards, minstrels, panegyrists and songsters chanted solemn praises of the Lord of Raghus. Everyone gave whatever one possessed; even he who received did not retain it. All the lanes of the city were muddy with pastes of musk, sandal and saffron. (1—4)

दो०—गृह गृह बाज बधाव सुभ प्रगटे सुषमा कंद ।
हरषवंत सब जहँ तहँ नगर नारि नर बृंद ॥ १९४ ॥

* A commemorative offering to the Manes preliminary to any joyous occasion, such as investiture with the sacred thread, wedding etc.

There was happy music of festivity in every house; for the very Fountain of beauty had manifested Himself. All the men and women of the city were full of joy everywhere.

(194)

चौ०—कैकयसुता सुमित्रा दोऊ । सुंदर सुत जनमत भैं ओऊ ॥
वह सुख संपति समय समाजा । कहि न सकइ सारद अहिराजा ॥ १ ॥
अवधपुरी सोहइ एहि भाँती । प्रभुहि मिलन आई जनु राती ॥
देखि भानु जनु मन सकुचानी । तदपि बनी संध्या अनुमानी ॥ २ ॥
अगर धूप बहु जनु अँधिआरी । उड़इ अबीर मनहुँ अरुनारी ॥
मंदिर मनि समूह जनु तारा । नृप गृह कलस सो इंदु उदारा ॥ ३ ॥
भवन बेदधुनि अति मृदु बानी । जनु खग मुखर समयँ जनु सानी ॥
कौतुक देखि पतंग भुलाना । एक मास तेइँ जात न जाना ॥ ४ ॥

Kaikeyī and Sumitrā each gave birth to a lovely boy. The joy, grandeur, solemnity of the occasion and the concourse of men were more than what Śāradā and the serpent-king could describe. The city of Ayodhyā wore a galla appearance; it looked as if Night had come to see the Lord and, feeling abashed as it were at the sight of the sun (her own lord), had deliberately stayed over in the form of twilight. Clouds of incense represented the dusk; and handfuls of red powder tossed up and wafted in the air represented the reddish light of sunset. The hosts of jewels that gleamed on house-tops looked like so many stars; while the round pinnacle on the top of the royal palace corresponded to the beautiful moon. The murmuring sound of the chanting of Veda in the palace resembled the chirping of birds appropriate to the occasion. Gazing upon this spectacle the sun forgot himself; a whole month passed without his knowing it.

(1–4)

दो०—मास दिवस कर दिवस भा मरम न जानइ कोइ ।
रथ समेत रबि थाकेउ निसा कवन बिधि होइ ॥ १९५ ॥

The day assumed the length of a month; but no one could understand the mystery. The sun stood motionless with his chariot; how could there be any night?

(195)

चौ०—यह रहस्य काहूँ नहिं जाना । दिनमनि चले करत गुनगाना ॥
देखि महोत्सव सुर मुनि नागा । चले भवन बरनत निज भागा ॥ १ ॥
औरउ एक कहउँ निज चोरी । सुनु गिरिजा अति दृढ़ मति तोरी ॥
काकभुसुंडि संग हम दोऊ । मनुजरूप जानइ नहिं कोऊ ॥ २ ॥
परमानंद प्रेमसुख फूले । बीथिन्ह फिरहिं मगन मन भूले ॥
यह सुभ चरित जान पै सोई । कृपा राम कै जापर होई ॥ ३ ॥
तेहि अवसर जो जेहि बिधि आवा । दीन्ह भूप जो जेहि मन भावा ॥
गज रथ तुरग हेम गो हीरा । दीन्हे नृप नानाबिधि चीरा ॥ ४ ॥

Nobody noticed this strange phenomenon; the sun at last moved ahead singing the praises of Śrī Rāma as he went. Witnessing the great

festival the gods, sages and Nāgas proceeded to their several abodes congratulating themselves on their good luck. I tell you one more covert act of Mine; listen to it, O Girija, for I know your steadfast faith. The sage Kākabhuśundi and Myself both were there together in human form without anyone knowing it. Elated with supreme joy and the delight of love we roamed about the streets in ecstasy forgetting ourselves. He alone who enjoyed Śrī Rāma's grace could be apprised of this blessed adventure of ours. On that occasion the king granted the desire of everyone's heart, in whatever manner one came. He bestowed elephants, chariots, horses, gold, cows, diamonds and costumes of various kinds. (1–4)

दो०—मन संतोषे सबन्हि के जहँ तहँ देहिं असीस ।
सकल तनय चिर जीवहुँ तुलसिदास के ईस ॥ १९६ ॥

All were satisfied in their heart and invoked blessings here and there, saying, "May all the sons of Daśaratha live long, those Lords of Tulasīdāsa." (196)

चौ०—कछुक दिवस बीते एहि भाँती । जात न जानिअ दिन अरु राती ॥
नामकरन कर अवसरु जानी । भूप बोलि पठए मुनि ग्यानी ॥ १ ॥
करि पूजा भूपति अस भाषा । धरिअ नाम जो मुनि गुनि राखा ॥
इन्ह के नाम अनेक अनूपा । मैं नृप कहब स्वमति अनुरूपा ॥ २ ॥
जो आनंद सिंधु सुख रासी । सीकर तें त्रैलोक सुपासी ॥
सो सुख धाम राम अस नामा । अखिल लोक दायक बिश्रामा ॥ ३ ॥
बिस्व भरन पोषन कर जोई । ताकर नाम भरत अस होई ॥
जाके सुमिरन तें रिपु नासा । नाम सत्रुहन बेद प्रकासा ॥ ४ ॥

A few days rolled on in this way; days and nights passed unnoticed. Knowing that the time had come for naming the children, the king sent for the enlightened sage Vasiṣtha. After paying him homage the king spoke to him thus, "Holy sir ! Kindly assign them names that you have fixed your mind upon." "Their names are many and unique; yet, O king, I will declare them according to my own lights. This eldest boy of yours, who is an ocean of felicity and embodiment of joy, a particle of which fills the three worlds with delight, has for His name 'Rāma', the very home of bliss and the comforter of all the worlds. Your second son, who sustains and supports the universe, will be called 'Bharata'; while he whose very thought destroys one's enemies is celebrated in the Vedas by the name of 'Śatrughna'." (1–4)

दो०—लच्छन धाम राम प्रिय सकल जगत आधार ।
गुरु बसिष्ट तेहि राखा लछिमन नाम उदार ॥ १९७ ॥

He who is the abode of noble characteristics, the beloved of Śrī Rāma and the mainstay of the whole universe, was given by Guru Vasiṣṭha the splendid name of Lakṣmaṇa. (197)

चौ०—धरे नाम गुर हृदयँ बिचारी । बेद तत्त्व नृप तव सुत चारी ॥
मुनि धन जन सरबस सिव प्राना । बाल केलि रस तेहिं सुख माना ॥ १ ॥

बारेहिं ते निज हित पति जानी । लछिमन राम चरन रति मानी ॥
भरत सत्रुहन दूनउ भाई । प्रभु सेवक जसि प्रीति बड़ाई ॥ २ ॥
स्याम गौर सुंदर दोउ जोरी । निरखहिं छबि जननीं तृन तोरी ॥
चारिउ सील रूप गुन धामा । तदपि अधिक सुखसागर रामा ॥ ३ ॥
हृदयँ अनुग्रह इंदु प्रकासा । सूचत किरन मनोहर हासा ॥
कबहुँ उछंग कबहुँ बर पलना । मातु दुलारइ कहि प्रिय ललना ॥ ४ ॥

The preceptor assigned these names after careful thought and then said, "Your four sons, O king, are the essence of Veda itself. Of them Śrī Rāma is the sages' treasure, the devotee's all in all and Śiva's very life; He takes delight at present in the rapture of childish sports". From his earliest days Lakṣmaṇa came to look upon Śrī Rāma as his benefactor and master and conceived devotion to His feet. The love that existed between the two half-brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna, was as glorious as that which obtains between a master and his servant. As the mothers gazed on the beauty of the two lovely pairs, one of whom was dark, the other fair, they would break a blade of grass in order to avert the evil eye. Although all the four brothers were embodiments of amiability, beauty and goodness, yet Śrī Rāma was an ocean of bliss *par excellence*. In His heart shone the moon of grace and His captivating smile represented its rays. Now on her lap and now in the beautiful cradle, the mother fondled Him calling Him her own darling. (1–4)

दो०—ब्यापक ब्रह्म निरंजन निर्गुन बिगत बिनोद ।
सो अज प्रेम भगति बस कौसल्या कें गोद ॥ १९८ ॥

The unborn and all-pervading Brahma, who is untainted by Māyā, without attributes and devoid of play, has sought shelter in the arms of Kausalyā, conquered by her love and devotion. (198)

चौ०—काम कोटि छबि स्याम सरीरा । नील कंज बारिद गंभीरा ॥
अरुन चरन पंकज नख जोती । कमल दलन्हि बैठे जनु मोती ॥ १ ॥
रेख कुलिस ध्वज अंकुस सोहे । नूपुर धुनि सुनि मुनि मन मोहे ॥
कटि किंकिनी उदर त्रय रेखा । नाभि गभीर जान जेहिं देखा ॥ २ ॥
भुज बिसाल भूषन जुत भूरी । हियँ हरि नख अति सोभा रूरी ॥
उर मनिहार पदिक की सोभा । बिप्र चरन देखत मन लोभा ॥ ३ ॥
कंबु कंठ अति चिबुक सुहाई । आनन अमित मदन छबि छाई ॥
दुइ दुइ दसन अधर अरुनारे । नासा तिलक को बरनै पारे ॥ ४ ॥
सुंदर श्रवन सुचारु कपोला । अति प्रिय मधुर तोतरे बोला ॥
चिक्कन कच कुंचित गभुआरे । बहु प्रकार रचि मातु सँवारे ॥ ५ ॥
पीत झगुलिआ तनु पहिराई । जानु पानि बिचरनि मोहि भाई ॥
रूप सकहिं नहिं कहि श्रुति सेषा । सो जानइ सपनेहुँ जेहिं देखा ॥ ६ ॥

His dark form, which resembles a blue lotus and a heavy rain-cloud, possessed the beauty of millions of Cupids. The nails glistened on His red

lotus-like feet as if pearls had been set on the petals of a rosy lotus. Marks of a thunderbolt, a flag and a goad shone on His soles and the tinkling of His anklets enraptured the heart of sages. A string of tiny bells girdled His waist and there were three folds in His belly; the depth of His navel is known to him alone who has perceived it. His long arms were adorned with a number of ornaments and the tiger's claw hanging on his breast possessed an exquisite beauty. The elegance of the necklace of gems with a diamond at the lowest end and the print of the Brahman's foot* fascinated one's mind. His neck resembled a conch-shell in its spiral shape and the chin looked most beautiful; while His face flushed with the beauty of countless Cupids. Pairs of small teeth were veiled by rosy lips and His beautiful nose and the sectarian mark on His brow defied description. With charming ears and most lovely cheeks His sweet lisping prattle was most delightful to hear. The smooth and curly hair that had never been trimmed since His very birth had been beautifully dressed in manifold ways by the mother. A yellow frock covered His body and His crawling on knees and hands was most pleasing to Me. The elegance of His form was something which even the Vedas and Śeṣa (the serpent-god) could not describe; it is known to him alone who has beheld it even in a dream. (1–6)

दो०—सुख संदोह मोहपर ग्यान गिरा गोतीत ।
दंपति परम प्रेम बस कर सिसुचरित पुनीत ॥ १९९ ॥

The all-blissful Lord, who is above delusion and transcends knowledge, speech and all sensuous perception, sported like an innocent child, yielding to the supreme love of the royal couple (Daśaratha and Kausalyā) (199)

चौ०—एहि बिधि राम जगत पितु माता । कोसलपुर बासिन्ह सुखदाता ॥
जिन्ह रघुनाथ चरन रति मानी । तिन्ह की यह गति प्रगट भवानी ॥ १ ॥
रघुपति बिमुख जतन कर कोरी । कवन सकइ भव बंधन छोरी ॥
जीव चराचर बस कै राखे । सो माया प्रभु सों भय भाखे ॥ २ ॥

* Once upon a time there was a discussion among the sages as to which of the three Lords of creation, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva was the greatest. In order to put the matter to the test Brahmā's son Bhṛgu was deputed to visit the three divinities one by one. Bhṛgu first approached his own father and did not bow to him as a dutiful son. This enraged Brahmā: but he somehow managed to curb his anger by force of reason. From Brahmā's court the sage went to Kailāsa. The god of gods, Śankara, rose to greet the sage and stretched His arms to embrace him. But Bhṛgu avoided His touch saying, "Touch me not, since you have broken social conventions and flouted the injunctions of the Vedas." Śiva lost His temper when He heard these aspersions. Taking up His trident He proceeded to strike the sage; but Goddess Pārvatī intervened and pacified Him. Thereafter Bhṛgu went to Vaikuṇṭha, the abode of Bhagavān Viṣṇu, and found the Lord reposing with His head on the lap of Śrī Lakṣmī. Breaking into His room unceremoniously the sage suddenly kicked Him on the chest. The almighty Lord quickly rose with Śrī Lakṣmī, alighted from His bed and, offering him homage, asked his forgiveness for the incivility shown to him by not welcoming him in advance. The Lord then rubbed the sage's foot saying that it might have been hurt by striking against His hard breast. Since then the Lord has ever borne on His bosom the print of the sage's foot as a mark of honour and it stands as an abiding monument to His unequalled forbearance.

भृकुटि बिलास नचावइ ताही । अस प्रभु छाड़ि भजिअ कहु काही ॥
मन क्रम बचन छाड़ि चतुराई । भजत कृपा करिहहिं रघुराई ॥ ३ ॥
एहि बिधि सिसुबिनोद प्रभु कीन्हा । सकल नगरबासिन्ह सुख दीन्हा ॥
लै उछंग कबहुँक हलरावै । कबहुँ पालनें घालि झुलावै ॥ ४ ॥

In this way Śrī Rāma, the father and mother of the universe, delighted the people of Ayodhya. Bhavānī, this demonstrates how those who have conceived devotion to the feet of the Lord of Raghus are repaid by Him. On the other hand, no one can liberate from the bondage of worldly existence him who is averse to the Lord of Raghus, however much he may struggle. Even that Māyā which has held under her sway all living beings, both animate and inanimate, trembles before the Lord, who makes her dance to the play of His eye-brows. Leaving such a lord, tell me, whom should we adore ? The Lord of Raghus will compassionate those who betake themselves to Him in thought, word and deed, giving up all cleverness. In this way the Lord sported as a child, to the delight of all the people of the city. The mother would now dandle Him in her arms, and now put Him down and rock Him in the cradle.

(1–4)

दो०—प्रेम मगन कौसल्या निसि दिन जात न जान ।
सुत सनेह बस माता बालचरित कर गान ॥ २०० ॥

Kausalyā remained so rapt in love that days and nights passed unnoticed. Out of affection for her boy she would sing lays of His childhood. (200)

चौ०—एक बार जननीं अन्हवाए । करि सिंगार पलनाँ पौढ़ाए ॥
निज कुल इष्टदेव भगवाना । पूजा हेतु कीन्ह अस्नाना ॥ १ ॥
करि पूजा नैबेद्य चढ़ावा । आपु गई जहँ पाक बनावा ॥
बहुरि मातु तहवाँ चलि आई । भोजन करत देख सुत जाई ॥ २ ॥
गै जननी सिसु पहिं भयभीता । देखा बाल तहाँ पुनि सूता ॥
बहुरि आइ देखा सुत सोई । हृदयँ कंप मन धीर न होई ॥ ३ ॥
इहाँ उहाँ दुइ बालक देखा । मतिभ्रम मोर कि आन बिसेषा ॥
देखि राम जननी अकुलानी । प्रभु हँसि दीन्ह मधुर मुसुकानी ॥ ४ ॥

One day, mother Kausalya washed and adorned her boy and put Him to sleep in the cradle. Thereafter she bathed herself in order to worship the patron deity of her family. Having worshipped the deity she offered Him food and then returned to the kitchen. When she came back to the place of worship, she beheld her boy eating the food that had been offered to the Lord. Frightened at this, the mother went to her boy and found Him asleep in the nursery. Coming back once more to the temple she still saw the boy there. She now trembled with fear and her mind found no rest. She saw two boys, one in the temple and the other in the nursery. She said to herself, "Is it my mental illusion or some other unusual phenomenon ?" When Śrī Rama saw His mother perplexed, the Lord gently smiled.

(1–4)

दो०—देखरावा मातहि निज अद्भुत रूप अखंड।
रोम रोम प्रति लागे कोटि कोटि ब्रह्मंड ॥ २०१ ॥

The Lord then revealed to His mother His marvellous infinite form, every pore of whose skin contained millions of universes. (201)

चौ०—अगनित रबि ससि सिव चतुरानन। बहु गिरि सरित सिंधु महि कानन ॥
काल कर्म गुन ग्यान सुभाऊ। सोउ देखा जो सुना न काऊ ॥ १ ॥
देखी माया सब बिधि गाढ़ी। अति सभीत जोरें कर ठाढ़ी ॥
देखा जीव नचावइ जाही। देखी भगति जो छोरइ ताही ॥ २ ॥
तन पुलकित मुख बचन न आवा। नयन मूदि चरननि सिरु नावा ॥
बिसमयवंत देखि महतारी। भए बहुरि सिसुरूप खरारी ॥ ३ ॥
अस्तुति करि न जाइ भय माना। जगत पिता मैं सुत करि जाना ॥
हरि जननी बहु बिधि समुझाई। यह जनि कतहुँ कहसि सुनु माई ॥ ४ ॥

She saw therein countless suns and moons, Śivas and four-faced Brahmas, and a number of mountains, rivers, oceans, plains and woods, as well as the spirit of time, the principle of action, the modes of Prakṛti (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas), the spirit of knowledge and Nature and many more things of which she had never heard before. She further perceived Maya, who is powerful in every respect, stricken with terror and standing with her palms joined together. The mother also beheld the embodied soul, who is made to dance by Maya, and even so the spirit of devotion, which liberates the soul. The hair on the mother's body bristled and she stood speechless. Closing her eyes she bowed her head at the Lord's feet. Seeing the mother struck with wonder the Slayer of Khara assumed the form of a child again. She was unable to utter praises and trembled at the thought that she had looked upon the Father of the universe as her own child. Śrī Hari comforted His mother in many ways and said, "Listen, My mother: do not reveal this fact anywhere." (1—4)

दो०—बार बार कौसल्या बिनय करइ कर जोरि।
अब जनि कबहूँ ब्यापै प्रभु मोहि माया तोरि ॥ २०२ ॥

Joining her palms Kausalyā prayed again and again, "See, my lord, that Your Māyā no longer casts her spell on me." (202)

चौ०—बालचरित हरि बहु बिधि कीन्हा। अति अनंद दासन्ह कहँ दीन्हा ॥
कछुक काल बीतें सब भाई। बड़े भए परिजन सुखदाई ॥ १ ॥
चूड़ाकरन कीन्ह गुरु जाई। बिप्रन्ह पुनि दछिना बहु पाई ॥
परम मनोहर चरित अपारा। करत फिरत चारिउ सुकुमारा ॥ २ ॥
मन क्रम बचन अगोचर जोई। दसरथ अजिर बिचर प्रभु सोई ॥
भोजन करत बोल जब राजा। नहिं आवत तजि बाल समाजा ॥ ३ ॥
कौसल्या जब बोलन जाई। ठुमुकु ठुमुकु प्रभु चलहिं पराई ॥
निगम नेति सिव अंत न पावा। ताहि धरै जननी हठि धावा ॥ ४ ॥
धूसर धूरि भरें तनु आए। भूपति बिहसि गोद बैठाए ॥ ५ ॥

Śrī Hari indulged in many kinds of childish sports to the great delight of His servants. After some time all the four brothers passed the stage of infancy, gladdening the inmates of the house. The preceptor then came and performed the ceremony of tonsure; and the Brahmans received handsome presents for officiating at the same. All the four noble princes moved about indulging in numerous plays, which were most delightful to look at. The Lord, who cannot be comprehended through mind, speech or action, sported in the courtyard of Daśaratha. When the king, while at dinner, called Him, He would not turn up, loth as he was to leave the company of His playmates. When Kausalyā went to call Him, the Lord would run away toddling. He whom the Vedas declare in negative terms and whose end even Śiva could not find, the mother ran to catch Him by force. With His body besmirched all over with dust, He came and the king smilingly took Him in his arms. (1—5)

दो०—भोजन करत चपल चित इत उत अवसरु पाइ ।
भाजि चले किलकत मुख दधि ओदन लपटाइ ॥ २०३ ॥

Even while the Lord sat at dinner, His mind was restless, so that the moment He got a chance He would run away hither and thither with a scream of delight, His mouth daubed with curds and rice. (203)

चौ०—बालचरित अति सरल सुहाए । सारद सेष संभु श्रुति गाए ॥
जिन्ह कर मन इन्ह सन नहिं राता । ते जन बंचित किए बिधाता ॥ १ ॥
भए कुमार जबहिं सब भ्राता । दीन्ह जनेऊ गुरु पितु माता ॥
गुरगृहँ गए पढ़न रघुराई । अलप काल बिद्या सब आई ॥ २ ॥
जाकी सहज स्वास श्रुति चारी । सो हरि पढ़ यह कौतुक भारी ॥
बिद्या बिनय निपुन गुन सीला । खेलहिं खेल सकल नृपलीला ॥ ३ ॥
करतल बान धनुष अति सोहा । देखत रूप चराचर मोहा ॥
जिन्ह बीथिन्ह बिहरहिं सब भाई । थकित होहिं सब लोग लुगाई ॥ ४ ॥

His charming and most innocent childish sports have been sung by Śāradā, Śeṣa, Śambhu and the Vedas. Those whose mind does not take delight in these have been deprived by Providence of a great good fortune. When all the four brothers attained to boyhood, the preceptor as well as their parents invested them with the sacred thread. The Lord of Raghus then proceeded to His preceptor's residence for study and in a short time mastered all the branches of knowledge. What a great fun that Śrī Hari, whose natural breath stands crystallized in the form of the four Vedas, should go to school. Proficient in learning and perfect in politeness, virtues and decorum, they played all the games imitating the role of a king. With an arrow and bow in the hands of each they appeared most charming; their beauty enraptured the whole creation, both animate and inanimate. Through whichever street the four brothers passed in pursuit of their sport, all the men and women there stood motionless on perceiving them. (1—4)

दो०—कोसलपुर बासी नर नारि बृद्ध अरु बाल ।
प्रानहु ते प्रिय लागत सब कहुँ राम कृपाल ॥ २०४ ॥

The people of Ayodhyā, men and women, elderly men as well as children, all held the gracious Rāma dearer than life. (204)

चौ०—बंधु सखा सँग लेहिं बोलाई । बन मृगया नित खेलहिं जाई ॥
पावन मृग मारहिं जियँ जानी । दिन प्रति नृपहि देखावहिं आनी ॥ १ ॥
जे मृग राम बान के मारे । ते तनु तजि सुरलोक सिधारे ॥
अनुज सखा सँग भोजन करहीं । मातु पिता अग्या अनुसरहीं ॥ २ ॥
जेहि बिधि सुखी होहिं पुर लोगा । करहिं कृपानिधि सोइ संजोगा ॥
बेद पुरान सुनहिं मन लाई । आपु कहहिं अनुजन्ह समुझाई ॥ ३ ॥
प्रातकाल उठि कै रघुनाथा । मातु पिता गुरु नावहिं माथा ॥
आयसु मागि करहिं पुर काजा । देखि चरित हरषइ मन राजा ॥ ४ ॥

Calling his half-brothers and playmates Śrī Rāma would take them with Him and go out to the forest for hunting every day. He would deliberately kill only holy game and brought and showed the daily bag to the king. The beasts that were killed by Śrī Rāma's shaft went straight to heaven after death. He took His meals with His younger brothers and companions and obeyed the orders of His parents. He would always contrive means to delight the people of the city. He would listen to the Vedas and Purāṇas with rapt attention and would Himself expound the truths contained therein to His younger brothers. Rising at break of day the Lord of Raghus would bow His head to His parents and preceptor and, obtaining their permission, busied Himself with the affairs of the city. The king was glad at heart to see His noble acts. (1—4)

दो०—ब्यापक अकल अनीह अज निर्गुन नाम न रूप ।
भगत हेतु नाना बिधि करत चरित्र अनूप ॥ २०५ ॥

The Lord, who is all-pervading, indivisible, desireless, unbegotten, attributeless and without name or form, performed marvellous acts of various kinds for the sake of His devotees. (205)

चौ०—यह सब चरित कहा मैं गाई । आगिलि कथा सुनहु मन लाई ॥
बिस्वामित्र महामुनि ग्यानी । बसहिं बिपिन सुभ आश्रम जानी ॥ १ ॥
जहँ जप जग्य जोग मुनि करहीं । अति मारीच सुबाहुहि डरहीं ॥
देखत जग्य निसाचर धावहिं । करहिं उपद्रव मुनि दुख पावहिं ॥ २ ॥
गाधितनय मन चिंता ब्यापी । हरि बिनु मरहिं न निसिचर पापी ॥
तब मुनिबर मन कीन्ह बिचारा । प्रभु अवतरेउ हरन महि भारा ॥ ३ ॥
एहूँ मिस देखौं पद जाई । करि बिनती आनौं दोउ भाई ॥
ग्यान बिराग सकल गुन अयना । सो प्रभु मैं देखब भरि नयना ॥ ४ ॥

All this story has been sung by me; now hear attentively what followed. The great enlightened hermit Viśwāmitra lived in a forest knowing it to be a sacred spot. There he practised Japa (muttering of sacred formulas) and Yoga (contemplation) and performed sacrifices; but he was much afraid of the demons Mārīcha and Subāhu. For as soon as they saw a sacrifice they would hasten

to desecrate it to the great chagrin of the sage, who felt disturbed in his mind and thought that the wicked Rākṣasas could not be disposed of without Śrī Hari. The great sage then said to himself, "The Lord has already taken birth in order to relieve the earth of its burden. Let me make the outrage of the demons an excuse for seeing His feet and after due entreaty bring the two brothers here. I will regale my eyes with the sight of Him who is the abode of knowledge, dispassion and all virtues." (1–4)

दो०—बहुबिधि करत मनोरथ जात लागि नहिं बार।
करि मज्जन सरऊं जल गए भूप दरबार ॥ २०६ ॥

Indulging in expectations of various kinds the sage took no time in reaching his destination. Bathing in the stream of the Sarayū he proceeded to the royal court. (206)

चौ०—मुनि आगमन सुना जब राजा। मिलन गयउ लै बिप्र समाजा ॥
करि दंडवत मुनिहि सनमानी। निज आसन बैठारेन्हि आनी ॥ १ ॥
चरन पखारि कीन्हि अति पूजा। मो सम आजु धन्य नहिं दूजा ॥
बिबिध भाँति भोजन करवावा। मुनिबर हृदयँ हरष अति पावा ॥ २ ॥
पुनि चरननि मेले सुत चारी। राम देखि मुनि देह बिसारी ॥
भए मगन देखत मुख सोभा। जनु चकोर पूरन ससि लोभा ॥ ३ ॥
तब मन हरषि बचन कह राऊ। मुनि अस कृपा न कीन्हिहु काऊ ॥
केहि कारन आगमन तुम्हारा। कहहु सो करत न लावउँ बारा ॥ ४ ॥
असुर समूह सतावहिं मोही। मैं जाचन आयउँ नृप तोही ॥
अनुज समेत देहु रघुनाथा। निसिचर बध मैं होब सनाथा ॥ ५ ॥

When the king heard of the sage's visit he went out to meet him with a party of Brahmans. Prostrating himself on the ground the king reverently brought him in and seated him on his own throne. Then, washing the sage's feet, he paid him great honours and said, "No one else is so blessed as I am today." The king next entertained him with various kinds of food and the great sage was much delighted at heart. He then placed his four sons on the latter's feet. At the sight of Śrī Rāma the sage forgot all about himself. He was enraptured as he gazed on the beauty of Śrī Rāma's countenance even as the *Chakora* bird is enamoured of the full moon. Gladdened at heart, the king then addressed the following words to him, "Reverend sir, you have never shown such grace to me before. Tell me what brings you here; I will carry out your order without delay." "Hosts of demons molest me, O king; I have therefore come to ask something of you. Let me have the Lord of Raghus, Śrī Rāma, with His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa); with the extermination of the demons I will feel secure. (1–5)

दो०—देहु भूप मन हरषित तजहु मोह अग्यान।
धर्म सुजस प्रभु तुम्ह कौं इन्ह कहँ अति कल्यान ॥ २०७ ॥

"Entrust them to me, O king, with a cheerful heart; let no infatuation or ignorance stand in your way. You will earn religious merit and fair renown thereby, and your sons will be highly blessed." (207)

चौ०—सुनि राजा अति अप्रिय बानी । हृदय कंप मुख दुति कुमुलानी ॥
चौथेंपन पायउँ सुत चारी । बिप्र बचन नहिं कहेहु बिचारी ॥ १ ॥
मागहु भूमि धेनु धन कोसा । सर्बस देउँ आजु सहरोसा ॥
देह प्रान तें प्रिय कछु नाहीं । सोउ मुनि देउँ निमिष एक माहीं ॥ २ ॥
सब सुत प्रिय मोहि प्रान कि नाईं । राम देत नहिं बनइ गोसाईं ॥
कहँ निसिचर अति घोर कठोरा । कहँ सुंदर सुत परम किसोरा ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि नृप गिरा प्रेम रस सानी । हृदयँ हरष माना मुनि ग्यानी ॥
तब बसिष्ट बहु बिधि समुझावा । नृप संदेह नास कहँ पावा ॥ ४ ॥
अति आदर दोउ तनय बोलाए । हृदयँ लाइ बहु भाँति सिखाए ॥
मेरे प्रान नाथ सुत दोऊ । तुम्ह मुनि पिता आन नहिं कोऊ ॥ ५ ॥

Hearing this most unwelcome demand the king's heart quivered, and the brightness of his countenance faded. He said, "I have been blessed with these four sons in my old age. You have, therefore, made your demand without due consideration, holy sir. Ask of me land, cattle, goods and treasure; I will gladly give all I have without delay. Nothing is dearer than one's body and life; even these I would part with in a second. All my sons are dear to me as life; but in no case can I afford to spare Rāma, my lord. My lovely boys, who are yet too young, are no match for the most hideous and relentless demons." The enlightened hermit Viśwāmitra felt delighted at heart to hear the king's reply, steeped as it was in the nectar of love. Then Vasiṣṭha pleaded with the king in manifold ways and all his doubts were gone. Most politely he sent for the two boys and pressing them to his bosom admonished them in many ways. Turning to the sage he then said, "My lord, the two boys are my very life. You are their only father now, holy sir; there is no one to look after them." (1—5)

दो०—सौंपे भूप रिषिहि सुत बहुबिधि देइ असीस ।
जननी भवन गए प्रभु चले नाइ पद सीस ॥ २०८ (क) ॥
सो०—पुरुषसिंह दोउ बीर हरषि चले मुनि भय हरन ।
कृपासिंधु मतिधीर अखिल बिस्व कारन करन ॥ २०८ (ख) ॥

Invoking various blessings on the boys the king committed them to the care of the sage; then they called at the mother's apartment and bowing their head at her feet departed. The two heroes, lions among men, oceans of compassion, resolute of purpose and the ultimate cause of the whole universe, gladly proceeded to rid the sage of his fear (208 A-B)

चौ०—अरुन नयन उर बाहु बिसाला । नील जलज तनु स्याम तमाला ॥
कटि पट पीत कसें बर भाथा । रुचिर चाप सायक दुहुँ हाथा ॥ १ ॥

स्याम गौर सुंदर दोउ भाई । बिस्वामित्र महानिधि पाई ॥
प्रभु ब्रह्मन्यदेव मैं जाना । मोहि निति पिता तजेउ भगवाना ॥ २ ॥
चले जात मुनि दीन्हि देखाई । सुनि ताड़का क्रोध करि धाई ॥
एकहिं बान प्रान हरि लीन्हा । दीन जानि तेहि निज पद दीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
तब रिषि निज नाथहि जियँ चीन्ही । बिद्यानिधि कहुँ बिद्या दीन्ही ॥
जाते लाग न छुधा पिपासा । अतुलित बल तनु तेज प्रकासा ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord had reddish eyes, a broad chest and long arms; His body was dark as the blue lotus or the Tamāla tree. With a beautiful quiver fastened at His back with a yellow piece of cloth wrapped round His waist, He held in His two hands a lovely bow and arrow respectively. In the two pretty boys, one of whom was dark and the other fair, Viśwāmitra secured a great treasure. "I have now realized," said he to himself, "that the Lord is a votary of the Brahmans; on my account He has left His own father." While on the way the sage pointed out the demoness Tāḍakā, who on hearing their voice rushed up in a fury. With a single shaft the Lord took her life and recognizing her as deserving of compassion bestowed His own state on her. Then the seer Viśwāmitra, while recognizing his lord as the fountain of knowledge, imparted to Him a sacred formula which armed Him against hunger and thirst and endowed Him with unequalled strength of body and a glow of vigour. (1–4)

दो०—आयुध सर्ब समर्पि कै प्रभु निज आश्रम आनि ।
कंद मूल फल भोजन दीन्ह भगति हित जानि ॥ २०९ ॥

Making over to Him every kind of weapon the sage took the Lord to his own hermitage and devoutly gave Him bulbs, roots and fruits to eat, perceiving in Him his greatest friend. (209)

चौ०—प्रात कहा मुनि सन रघुराई । निर्भय जग्य करहु तुम्ह जाई ॥
होम करन लागे मुनि झारी । आपु रहे मख कीं रखवारी ॥ १ ॥
सुनि मारीच निसाचर क्रोही । लै सहाय धावा मुनिद्रोही ॥
बिनु फर बान राम तेहि मारा । सत जोजन गा सागर पारा ॥ २ ॥
पावक सर सुबाहु पुनि मारा । अनुज निसाचर कटकु सँघारा ॥
मारि असुर द्विज निर्भयकारी । अस्तुति करहिं देव मुनि झारी ॥ ३ ॥
तहँ पुनि कछुक दिवस रघुराया । रहे कीन्हि बिप्रन्ह पर दाया ॥
भगति हेतु बहु कथा पुराना । कहे बिप्र जद्यपि प्रभु जाना ॥ ४ ॥
तब मुनि सादर कहा बुझाई । चरित एक प्रभु देखिअ जाई ॥
धनुषजग्य सुनि रघुकुल नाथा । हरषि चले मुनिबर के साथा ॥ ५ ॥
आश्रम एक दीख मग माहीं । खग मृग जीव जंतु तहँ नाहीं ॥
पूछा मुनिहि सिला प्रभु देखी । सकल कथा मुनि कहा बिसेषी ॥ ६ ॥

At daybreak the Lord of Raghus said to the sage, "You may now go and perform your sacrifice without any fear of molestation." All the sages then

started offering oblations into the sacred fire, while Śrī Rāma Himself guarded the sacrifice. On hearing of it the furious demon Mārīcha, a great enemy of hermits, rushed with his army. Śrī Rāma struck him with a headless shaft and he fell at a distance of eight hundred miles beyond the sea-shore. The Lord next despatched Subāhu with an arrow of fire; while His younger brother, Lakṣmaṇa, exterminated the demon host. Having killed the demons in this way the Lord rid the Brahmans of their fear; the whole company of gods and sages offered praises to Him. The Lord of Raghus stayed there a few days more and showed His grace to the Brahmans. Even though the Lord knew everything, the Brahmans out of their devotion repeated to Him many legends from the Purāṇas. The sage then politely said to Him in a pleading tone, "My lord, let us go and witness a performance." Hearing of a bow-sacrifice, the Lord of Raghus gladly accompanied the noble sage. On the way they saw a hermitage without bird, beast or any other living creature. Observing a slab of stone lying there the Lord inquired of the sage about it, and the latter in reply told Him in detail the whole history behind it. (1—6)

दो०—गौतम नारि श्राप बस उपल देह धरि धीर ।
बरन कमल रज चाहति कृपा करहु रघुबीर ॥ २१० ॥

"Gautama's consort, having assumed the form of a stone under a curse, seeks with patience the dust of your lotus feet; show mercy to her, O Hero of Raghu's race." (210)

छं०—परसत पद पावन सोक नसावन प्रगट भई तपपुंज सही ।
देखत रघुनायक जन सुखदायक सनमुख होइ कर जोरि रही ॥
अति प्रेम अधीरा पुलक सरीरा मुख नहिं आवइ बचन कही ।
अतिसय बड़भागी चरनन्हि लागी जुगल नयन जलधार बही ॥ १ ॥
धीरजु मन कीन्हा प्रभु कहुँ चीन्हा रघुपति कृपाँ भगति पाई ।
अति निर्मल बानीं अस्तुति ठानी ग्यानगम्य जय रघुराई ॥
मैं नारि अपावन प्रभु जग पावन रावन रिपु जन सुखदाई ।
राजीव बिलोचन भव भय मोचन पाहि पाहि सरनहिं आई ॥ २ ॥
मुनि श्राप जो दीन्हा अति भल कीन्हा परम अनुग्रह मैं माना ।
देखेउँ भरि लोचन हरि भवमोचन इहइ लाभ संकर जाना ॥
बिनती प्रभु मोरी मैं मति भोरी नाथ न मागउँ बर आना ।
पद कमल परागा रस अनुरागा मम मन मधुप करै पाना ॥ ३ ॥
जेहिं पद सुरसरिता परम पुनीता प्रगट भई सिव सीस धरी ।
सोई पद पंकज जेहि पूजत अज मम सिर धरेउ कृपाल हरी ॥
एहि भाँति सिधारी गौतम नारी बार बार हरि चरन परी ।
जो अति मन भावा सो बरु पावा गै पतिलोक अनंद भरी ॥ ४ ॥

At the very touch of His holy feet, which drive away sorrow, emerged Ahalyā, a true embodiment of austerity. Beholding the Lord of Raghus, the delight of His servants, she stood before Him with joined palms. Her heart being overwhelmed with love, the hair on her body stood on their end and she was unable to utter a word. The most blessed Ahalyā cleaved to His feet and tears streamed from both her eyes. Recovering herself she recognized the Lord and by the grace of Śrī Rāma attained devotion to His feet. In a guileless speech she began to praise the Lord, "Glory to the Lord of Raghus, who is accessible through spiritual knowledge. I am an impure woman, while the Lord is able to sanctify the whole world and is the delight of His servants. O lotus-eyed enemy of Rāvaṇa, You rid Your devotees of the fear of rebirth; therefore I have taken refuge in You. Pray save me, save me. My consort (Gautama) did well in pronouncing a curse on me, and I have deemed it the greatest favour. I have feasted my eyes on Śrī Hari (Yourself), who liberates from the bondage of worldly existence. Lord Śankara deems Your sight as the only blessing worth the name. Lord, I am very innocent of heart; I have only one request to make. I seek no other boon from You, my Master; I only crave that my mind may ever continue to enjoy the love of Your feet-dust even as a bee sucks the honey from a lotus. The merciful Lord Śrī Hari placed on my head the same lotus feet from which issued the most holy Gangā (the heavenly river)—which is borne by Śiva on His head,—and which are adored by Brahmā (the Creator)." Having thus praised Śrī Hari and falling again and again at His feet Gautama's consort (Ahalyā) took leave of the Lord; and securing a boon, which she held most dear to her heart, she went to her husband's abode full of joy. (1—4)

दो०—अस प्रभु दीनबंधु हरि कारन रहित दयाल ।
तुलसिदास सठ तेहि भजु छाड़ि कपट जंजाल ॥ २११ ॥

The Lord Śrī Hari is such a great friend of the humble and compassionate beyond one's deserts. Adore Him, O foolish Tulasīdāsa, giving up all deceit and wily wrangling. (211)

[PAUSE 7 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०--चले राम लछिमन मुनि संगा । गए जहाँ जग पावनि गंगा ॥
गाधिसूनु सब कथा सुनाई । जेहि प्रकार सुरसरि महि आई ॥ १ ॥
तब प्रभु रिषिन्ह समेत नहाए । बिबिध दान महिदेवन्हि पाए ॥
हरषि चले मुनि बृंद सहाया । बेगि बिदेह नगर निअराया ॥ २ ॥
पुर रम्यता राम जब देखी । हरषे अनुज समेत बिसेषी ॥
बापीं कूप सरित सर नाना । सलिल सुधासम मनि सोपाना ॥ ३ ॥
गुंजत मंजु मत्त रस भृंगा । कूजत कल बहुबरन बिहंगा ॥
बरन बरन बिकसे बनजाता । त्रिबिध समीर सदा सुखदाता ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa accompanied the sage and reached the bank of the Gangā, the stream of which purifies the whole universe. The son of Gādhi, Viśwāmitra, related the whole legend how the celestial stream had come down upon earth. The Lord then performed His ablutions with all the sages, and

the Brahmans received gifts of various kinds. Accompanied by a troop of hermits the Lord gladly proceeded further and quickly drew near to the capital of the Videhas, Mithilā. When Śrī Rāma beheld the beauty of the city, He as well as His younger brother were much delighted. There were many big and small wells, rivers and tanks with water as sweet as nectar and reached by flights of steps made of jewels. Bees, drunk with honey, made a sweet humming sound and birds of various hues softly cooed. Lotuses of different colours opened their petals; while a cool, soft and fragrant breeze ever delighted the soul. (1–4)

दो०—सुमन बाटिका बाग बन बिपुल बिहंग निवास ।
फूलत फलत सुपल्लवत सोहत पुर चहुँ पास ॥ २१२ ॥

The city was adorned on all sides with flower-gardens, orchards and groves, the haunt of innumerable birds, full of blossoms, fruits and charming leaves. (212)

चौ०—बनइ न बरनत नगर निकाई । जहाँ जाइ मन तहँइँ लोभाई ॥
चारु बजारु बिचित्र अँबारी । मनिमय बिधि जनु स्वकर सँवारी ॥ १ ॥
धनिक बनिक बर धनद समाना । बैठे सकल बस्तु लै नाना ॥
चौहट सुंदर गलीं सुहाई । संतत रहहिं सुगंध सिंचाई ॥ २ ॥
मंगलमय मंदिर सब केरें । चित्रित जनु रतिनाथ चितेरें ॥
पुर नर नारि सुभग सुचि संता । धरमसील ग्यानी गुनवंता ॥ ३ ॥
अति अनूप जहँ जनक निवासू । बिथकहिं बिबुध बिलोकि बिलासू ॥
होत चकित चित कोट बिलोकी । सकल भुवन सोभा जनु रोकी ॥ ४ ॥

The beauty of the city surpassed description; every inch of it was soul-captivating. There was a lovely bazar and gorgeous balconies made of jewels, fashioned as it were by the Creator with his own hands. Wealthy and good merchants, who vied with Kubera (the god of wealth), sat with all their various goods. Beautiful crossings of roads and charming streets were constantly sprinkled with scented waters. The houses of all were abodes of bliss and contained beautiful wall-paintings portrayed, as it were, by Rati's lord (Cupid) himself. The people of the city, both men and women, were good-looking, pious, saintly, virtuous, wise and accomplished. The palace of King Janaka was most marvellous, the sight of whose splendour astounded even gods. Even the fortification wall filled the mind with wonder; it seemed as if it had enclosed within its limits the beauty of the whole universe. (1–4)

दो०—धवल धाम मनि पुरट पट सुघटित नाना भाँति ।
सिय निवास सुंदर सदन सोभा किमि कहि जाति ॥ २१३ ॥

White palaces were screened here and there by bejewelled gold tapestries of various beautiful designs; while the exquisite palace where Sītā lived was far too lovely for words to describe. (213)

चौ०—सुभग द्वार सब कुलिस कपाटा । भूप भीर नट मागध भाटा ॥
बनी बिसाल बाजि गज साला । हय गय रथ संकुल सब काला ॥ १ ॥

सूर सचिव सेनप बहुतेरे । नृपगृह सरिस सदन सब केरे ॥
पुर बाहेर सर सरित समीपा । उतरे जहँ तहँ बिपुल महीपा ॥ २ ॥
देखि अनूप एक अँवराई । सब सुपास सब भाँति सुहाई ॥
कौसिक कहेउ मोर मनु माना । इहाँ रहिअ रघुबीर सुजाना ॥ ३ ॥
भलेहिं नाथ कहि कृपानिकेता । उतरे तहँ मुनिबृंद समेता ॥
बिस्वामित्र महामुनि आए । समाचार मिथिलापति पाए ॥ ४ ॥

The entrances to the palace were all beautiful and protected with doors of diamond. They were always thronged with feudatory princes, dancers, panegyrists and bards. There were spacious stables and stalls for elephants, which were crowded at all times with steeds, elephants and chariots. The king had a number of brave ministers and generals. They all owned mansions that vied with the royal palace. In the outskirts of the city by the side of lakes and rivers numerous princes had encamped here and there. On seeing a fine mango-grove, which was comfortable and agreeable in every way, the sage Kauśika (Viśwāmitra) said, "O wise hero of Raghu's race, I like this orchard; let us stay here." "Very well, my lord!" answered the gracious Lord, and encamped there with all the hermits' train. When the king of Mithilā got the news that the great sage Viśwāmitra had come, (1–4)

दो०—संग सचिव सुचि भूरि भट भूसुर बर गुर ग्याति ।
चले मिलन मुनिनायकहि मुदित राउ एहि भाँति ॥ २१४ ॥

He took with him his faithful ministers, a number of warriors, noble Brahmans, his family preceptor (Śatānanda) and the chief of his kinsmen, and thus went forth rejoicing to meet the prince of sages. (214)

चौ०—कीन्ह प्रनामु चरन धरि माथा । दीन्हि असीस मुदित मुनिनाथा ॥
बिप्रबृंद सब सादर बंदे । जानि भाग्य बड़ राउ अनंदे ॥ १ ॥
कुसल प्रस्न कहि बारहिं बारा । बिस्वामित्र नृपहि बैठारा ॥
तेहि अवसर आए दोउ भाई । गए रहे देखन फुलवाई ॥ २ ॥
स्याम गौर मृदु बयस किसोरा । लोचन सुखद बिस्व चित चोरा ॥
उठे सकल जब रघुपति आए । बिस्वामित्र निकट बैठाए ॥ ३ ॥
भए सब सुखी देखि दोउ भ्राता । बारि बिलोचन पुलकित गाता ॥
मूरति मधुर मनोहर देखी । भयउ बिदेहु बिदेहु बिसेषी ॥ ४ ॥

Placing his head on the sage's feet the king made obeisance to him; while the lord of the sages, Viśwāmitra, gladly gave him his blessing. The king then respectfully saluted the Brahmans and congratulated himself on his good fortune (in being able to receive them). Inquiring again and again about his welfare, Viśwāmitra led the king to a seat. At that very time arrived the two half-brothers, who had gone to see the garden. One dark and the other fair, the two lads were yet tender of age. The delight of all eyes, they stole the heart of the whole world. All those present there rose when the Lord of

Raghus came; and Viśwāmitra seated Him by his side. They were all delighted to see the two brothers; tears rushed to their eyes and the hair on their body bristled with joy. Beholding Śrī Rāma's lovely and charming form, King Videha* (Janaka) was particularly beside himself with joy. (1—4)

दो०—प्रेम मगन मनु जानि नृपु करि बिबेकु धरि धीर।
बोलेउ मुनि पद नाइ सिरु गदगद गिरा गभीर ॥ २१५ ॥

Finding his heart overwhelmed with love the king recovered himself by recourse to reason and, bowing his head at the sage's feet, spoke the following pregnant words in a voice choked with emotion:— (215)

चौ०—कहहु नाथ सुंदर दोउ बालक। मुनिकुल तिलक कि नृपकुलपालक ॥
ब्रह्म जो निगम नेति कहि गावा। उभय बेष धरि की सोइ आवा ॥ १ ॥
सहज बिरागरूप मनु मोरा। थकित होत जिमि चंद चकोरा ॥
ताते प्रभु पूछउँ सतिभाऊ। कहहु नाथ जनि करहु दुराऊ ॥ २ ॥
इन्हहि बिलोकत अति अनुरागा। बरबस ब्रह्मसुखहि मन त्यागा ॥
कह मुनि बिहसि कहेहु नृप नीका। बचन तुम्हार न होइ अलीका ॥ ३ ॥
ये प्रिय सबहि जहाँ लगि प्रानी। मन मुसुकाहिं रामु सुनि बानी ॥
रघुकुल मनि दसरथ के जाए। मम हित लागि नरेस पठाए ॥ ४ ॥

"Tell me, my lord: are these two pretty boys the ornament of a sage's family or the bulwarks of some royal dynasty? Or, is it that Brahma (the Absolute), whom the Vedas describe in negative terms such as 'Not that' (*Neti*), has appeared in a dual form? My mind, which is dispassion itself in its natural form, is enraptured at their sight even as the Chakora bird is transported with joy at the sight of the moon. Therefore, Sir, I earnestly inquire of you: tell me the truth, my Lord; hide nothing from me. Deeply attached to them at their very sight, my mind has perforce renounced the joy of absorption into Brahma." The sage smilingly answered, "You have spoken well, O king; your words can never be untrue. Whatever living beings there are in this world, they all love these boys." Śrī Rāma smiled within Himself on hearing these words. "They are the sons of King Daśaratha, the jewel of Raghu's race; the king has sent them for my cause. (1—4)

दो०—रामु लखनु दोउ बंधुबर रूप सील बल धाम।
मख राखेउ सबु साखि जगु जिते असुर संग्राम ॥ २१६ ॥

These two noble brothers, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, are the embodiments of beauty, virtue and strength. The whole world knows that they conquered the demons in battle and protected my sacrifice from harm." (216)

---

* There is a pun on the word 'Videha' in the original. The kings of Mithilā enjoyed the hereditary title of 'Videha' because they ruled over the territory of Videha (Mithilā). King Janaka was also a man of wisdom and had, therefore, no feeling of self-identification with the body. At the sight of Śrī Rāma, however, he was completely out of his body and therefore justified his name (Videha) in a special degree.

चौ०—मुनि तव चरन देखि कह राऊ । कहि न सकउँ निज पुन्य प्रभाऊ ॥
सुंदर स्याम गौर दोउ भ्राता । आनँदहू के आनँद दाता ॥ १ ॥
इन्ह कै प्रीति परसपर पावनि । कहि न जाइ मन भाव सुहावनि ॥
सुनहु नाथ कह मुदित बिदेहू । ब्रह्म जीव इव सहज सनेहू ॥ २ ॥
पुनि पुनि प्रभुहि चितव नरनाहू । पुलक गात उर अधिक उछाहू ॥
मुनिहि प्रसंसि नाइ पद सीसू । चलेउ लवाइ नगर अवनीसू ॥ ३ ॥
सुंदर सदनु सुखद सब काला । तहाँ बासु लै दीन्ह भुआला ॥
करि पूजा सब बिधि सेवकाई । गयउ राउ गृह बिदा कराई ॥ ४ ॥

"When I behold your feet, O sage," added the king, "I cannot tell what a great merit I have earned in the past. These two brothers, one of whom is dark of hue and the other fair, are the delight of delight itself. Their guileless affection for each other is beyond description; it is so agreeable and soul-ravishing." "Listen to me, my lord," continued King Videha rejoicing, "they have natural affinity for each other like the one existing between Brahma (the Supreme Spirit) and Jīva (the individual soul)." The king gazed upon the Lord over and over again; the hair on his body stood on end and his heart overflowed with joy. Extolling the sage and bowing his head at the latter's feet, the king escorted him to his capital, and lodged the sage in a beautiful palace which was comfortable at all times. Then, after further homage and rendering all kinds of service to him, the king took leave of the sage and returned to his own palace.

(1—4)

दो०—रिषय संग रघुबंस मनि करि भोजनु बिश्रामु ।
बैठे प्रभु भ्राता सहित दिवसु रहा भरि जामु ॥ २१७ ॥

Having dined with the seers and rested awhile, Lord Śrī Rāma, the Jewel of Raghu's race, sat down by His brother's side; a quarter of the day still remained.

(217)

चौ०—लखन हृदयँ लालसा बिसेषी । जाइ जनकपुर आइअ देखी ॥
प्रभु भय बहुरि मुनिहि सकुचाहीं । प्रगट न कहहिं मनहिं मुसुकाहीं ॥ १ ॥
राम अनुज मन की गति जानी । भगत बछलता हियँ हुलसानी ॥
परम बिनीत सकुचि मुसुकाई । बोले गुर अनुसासन पाई ॥ २ ॥
नाथ लखनु पुरु देखन चहहीं । प्रभु सकोच डर प्रगट न कहहीं ॥
जौं राउर आयसु मैं पावौं । नगर देखाइ तुरत लै आवौं ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि मुनीसु कह बचन सप्रीती । कस न राम तुम्ह राखहु नीती ॥
धरम सेतु पालक तुम्ह ताता । प्रेम बिबस सेवक सुखदाता ॥ ४ ॥

Lakṣmaṇa felt in his heart a great longing to go and see Janaka's capital. He was, however, afraid of the Lord and stood in awe of the sage; therefore he did not openly declare it and smiled within himself. Śrī Rāma understood what was passing in His younger brother's mind; and His heart overflowed with a kindly feeling for His devotee. Taking leave of His preceptor

to speak, He smilingly spoke with much diffidence in most polite terms, "My lord, Lakṣmaṇa longs to see the city, but out of fear and respect for you he does not make it known to you. If I have your permission, I will take him round the city and quickly bring him back." Hearing this the chief of sages, Viśwāmitra, replied in affectionate terms, "It is no wonder, Rāma, that You should respect good manners. You are the upholder of the moral code, my son, and bring joy to Your servants out of love for them. (1—4)

दो०—जाइ देखि आवहु नगरु सुख निधान दोउ भाइ।
करहु सुफल सब के नयन सुंदर बदन देखाइ ॥ २१८ ॥

"Go, blissful pair of brothers, and having seen the city come back. Bless the eyes of all by showing them your charming countenance." (218)

चौ०—मुनि पद कमल बंदि दोउ भ्राता। चले लोक लोचन सुख दाता ॥
बालक बृंद देखि अति सोभा। लगे संग लोचन मनु लोभा ॥ १ ॥
पीत बसन परिकर कटि भाथा। चारु चाप सर सोहत हाथा ॥
तन अनुहरत सुचंदन खोरी। स्यामल गौर मनोहर जोरी ॥ २ ॥
केहरि कंधर बाहु बिसाला। उर अति रुचिर नागमनि माला ॥
सुभग सोन सरसीरुह लोचन। बदन मयंक तापत्रय मोचन ॥ ३ ॥
कानन्हि कनक फूल छबि देहीं। चितवत चितहि चोरि जनु लेहीं ॥
चितवनि चारु भृकुटि बर बाँकी। तिलक रेख सोभा जनु चाँकी ॥ ४ ॥

Saluting the lotus-feet of the sage the two brothers, the delight of the eyes of the whole world, departed. Beholding the exquisite beauty of the two brothers troops of boys followed them, their eyes and mind being enamoured of it. Clad in yellow garments they had a quiver fastened at their back, with a cloth (of the same colour) wrapped round their waist; their hands were adorned with a graceful bow and arrow respectively. The beautiful pair, one of whom was dark and the other fair, had streaks of (red or white) sandal-wood paste painted on their body so as to match the complexion. With a neck as well-built as the lion's and long arms they had on their bosom an exquisite string of pearls obtained from the forehead of elephants. Their lovely eyes resembled the red lotus; and the moon-like face relieved one of the threefold agony. Their ears were adorned with pendants of gold, which stole as it were the heart of those who looked on them. They cast a bewitching glance and had a pair of arched and shapely eyebrows; the lines of the sectarian mark on the forehead looked as if beauty had been sealed there. (1—4)

दो०—रुचिर चौतनीं सुभग सिर मेचक कुंचित केस।
नख सिख सुंदर बंधु दोउ सोभा सकल सुदेस ॥ २१९ ॥

Their beautiful head was covered with a charming rectangular cap and dark curly locks. The two brothers were lovely from head to foot; the beauty of every limb was as it should be. (219)

चौ०—देखन नगरु भूपसुत आए । समाचार पुरबासिन्ह पाए ॥
धाए धाम काम सब त्यागी । मनहुँ रंक निधि लूटन लागी ॥ १ ॥
निरखि सहज सुंदर दोउ भाई । होहिं सुखी लोचन फल पाई ॥
जुबतीं भवन झरोखन्हि लागीं । निरखहिं राम रूप अनुरागीं ॥ २ ॥
कहहिं परसपर बचन सप्रीती । सखि इन्ह कोटि काम छबि जीती ॥
सुर नर असुर नाग मुनि माहीं । सोभा असि कहुँ सुनिअति नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
बिष्नु चारि भुज बिधि मुख चारी । बिकट बेष मुख पंच पुरारी ॥
अपर देउ अस कोउ न आही । यह छबि सखी पटतरिअ जाही ॥ ४ ॥

When the citizens received the news that the two princes had come to see the town, they all left their business and ran out of their homes as if paupers were out to grab a valuable property. Beholding the natural grace of two brothers, they were glad at heart and attained the consummation of their eyes. Sticking to the air-holes of their houses young ladies lovingly scanned Śrī Rāma's beauty. They fondly spoke to one another in the following words: "O friend, He has surpassed in beauty millions of Cupids. Nowhere among gods, men, demons, Nāgas or sages do we hear of such beauty. God Viṣṇu is endowed with four arms, Brahmā has four faces, while Śiva, the Slayer of Tripura, has a frightful garb and five faces. O friend, there is no other god who could stand comparison with this beauty. (1–4)

दो०—बय किसोर सुषमा सदन स्याम गौर सुखधाम ।
अंग अंग पर वारिअहिं कोटि कोटि सत काम ॥ २२० ॥

"The two lads, one dark and the other fair, are yet of tender age and are repositories of beauty and abodes of bliss. Millions and hundreds of millions of Cupids are worth sacrificing to each one of their limbs." (220)

चौ०—कहहु सखी अस को तनुधारी । जो न मोह यह रूप निहारी ॥
कोउ सप्रेम बोली मृदु बानी । जो मैं सुना सो सुनहु सयानी ॥ १ ॥
ए दोऊ दसरथ के ढोटा । बाल मरालन्हि के कल जोटा ॥
मुनि कौसिक मख के रखवारे । जिन्ह रन अजिर निसाचर मारे ॥ २ ॥
स्याम गात कल कंज बिलोचन । जो मारीच सुभुज मदु मोचन ॥
कौसल्या सुत सो सुख खानी । नामु रामु धनु सायक पानी ॥ ३ ॥
गौर किसोर बेषु बर काछें । कर सर चाप राम के पाछें ॥
लछिमनु नामु राम लघु भ्राता । सुनु सखि तासु सुमित्रा माता ॥ ४ ॥

'Tell me, friend, what embodied being is there that would not be charmed to see such beauty?" One of them lovingly said in gentle tones, "Hear, my dear, what I have been told. These two lads, a beautiful pair of cygnets as it were, are sons of King Daśaratha; they are the protectors of Kauśika's sacrifice, and have slain demons in the field of battle. He who has a swarthy form and has charming lotus-like eyes and who has quelled the pride of Mārīcha and Subahu, wielding a bow and shaft in His hands,

is Kausalyā's son, Rāma by name, the very fountain of bliss. The fair youth in gallant attire, who is closely following Śrī Rāma, a bow and arrow in hand, is the latter's younger brother and is named Lakṣmaṇa. Sumitrā, friend, is his mother, you must know. (1–4)

दो०—बिप्रकाजु करि बंधु दोउ मग मुनिबधू उधारि ।
आए देखन चापमख सुनि हरषीं सब नारि ॥ २२१ ॥

"Having accomplished the object of the Brahman, Viśwāmitra, and redeeming the sage's wife, Ahalyā, on the way, the two brothers have come here to witness the bow-sacrifice." All the ladies were delighted to hear this. (221)

चौ०—देखि राम छबि कोउ एक कहई । जोगु जानकिहि यह बरु अहई ॥
जौं सखि इन्हहि देख नरनाहू । पन परिहरि हठि करइ बिबाहू ॥ १ ॥
कोउ कह ए भूपति पहिचाने । मुनि समेत सादर सनमाने ॥
सखि परंतु पनु राउ न तजई । बिधि बस हठि अबिबेकहि भजई ॥ २ ॥
कोउ कह जौं भल अहइ बिधाता । सब कहँ सुनिअ उचित फलदाता ॥
तौ जानकिहि मिलिहि बरु एहू । नाहिन आलि इहाँ संदेहू ॥ ३ ॥
जौं बिधि बस अस बनै सँजोगू । तौ कृतकृत्य होइ सब लोगू ॥
सखि हमरें आरति अति तातें । कबहुँक ए आवहिं एहि नातें ॥ ४ ॥

Beholding Śrī Rāma's beauty someone said, "Here is a bridegroom worthy of Princess Jānakī. If the king does but see him, friend, I am sure he will abandon his vow and insist upon their marriage." Said another, "The king has come to know them and has received them as well as the sage with all honour. But the king, my dear, refuses to give up his vow and, as Fate would have it, persists in his folly." Yet another said, "If Providence is good and, as we are told, gives every man his due, then Jānakī is sure to have him as her bridegroom. About this, my dear, there can be no doubt. If such a union is brought about by Providence, everyone will have realized one's object. My impatience, friend, is augmented by the thought that this alliance will impel him to visit this place again. (1–4)

दो०—नाहिं त हम कहुँ सुनहु सखि इन्ह कर दरसनु दूरि ।
यह संघटु तब होइ जब पुन्य पुराकृत भूरि ॥ २२२ ॥

"Otherwise, my dear, it is out of question for us, I tell you, to see Him again. Such an event can take place only when we have a rich stock of merit accumulated in previous existences." (222)

चौ०—बोली अपर कहेहु सखि नीका । एहिं बिआह अति हित सबही का ॥
कोउ कह संकर चाप कठोरा । ए स्यामल मृदुगात किसोरा ॥ १ ॥
सबु असमंजस अहइ सयानी । यह सुनि अपर कहइ मृदु बानी ॥
सखि इन्ह कहँ कोउ कोउ अस कहहीं । बड़ प्रभाउ देखत लघु अहहीं ॥ २ ॥

परसि जासु पद पंकज धूरी । तरी अहल्या कृत अघ भूरी ॥
सो कि रहिहि बिनु सिवधनु तोरें । यह प्रतीति परिहरिअ न भोरें ॥ ३ ॥
जेहिं बिरंचि रचि सीय सँवारी । तेहिं स्यामल बरु रचेउ बिचारी ॥
तासु बचन सुनि सब हरषानीं । ऐसेइ होउ कहहिं मृदु बानीं ॥ ४ ॥

Someone else said, "Friend, you have spoken well. This union will be conducive to the best interests of all." Still another said, "Śankara's bow is hard to bend, while this swarthy lad is of delicate frame. Everything, my dear, is out of place." Hearing this, another said in a soft voice, "Friend, with regard to this lad I have heard some people say that, though small in appearance, He wields a great power. Touched by the dust of His lotus-feet Ahalyā, who had perpetrated a great sin, attained salvation. He will, therefore, surely break Śiva's bow; one should never commit the mistake of giving up this faith. The same Creator, who fashioned Sītā with great skill, has preordained for her this dark-complexioned bridegroom." Everyone was pleased to hear the words of this lady and softly exclaimed "Amen!" (1–4)

दो०—हियँ हरषहिं बरषहिं सुमन सुमुखि सुलोचनि बृंद ।
जाहिं जहाँ जहँ बंधु दोउ तहँ तहँ परमानंद ॥ २२३ ॥

In their gladness of heart troops of fair-faced, bright-eyed dames rained flowers on the princes. Wherever the two brothers went, there was supreme joy. (223)

चौ०—पुर पूरब दिसि गे दोउ भाई । जहँ धनुमख हित भूमि बनाई ॥
अति बिस्तार चारु गच ढारी । बिमल बेदिका रुचिर सँवारी ॥ १ ॥
चहुँ दिसि कंचन मंच बिसाला । रचे जहाँ बैठहिं महिपाला ॥
तेहि पाछें समीप चहुँ पासा । अपर मंच मंडली बिलासा ॥ २ ॥
कछुक ऊँचि सब भाँति सुहाई । बैठहिं नगर लोग जहँ जाई ॥
तिन्ह के निकट बिसाल सुहाए । धवल धाम बहुबरन बनाए ॥ ३ ॥
जहँ बैठें देखहिं सब नारी । जथाजोगु निज कुल अनुहारी ॥
पुर बालक कहि कहि मृदु बचना । सादर प्रभुहि देखावहिं रचना ॥ ४ ॥

The two brothers reached the eastern quarter of the city, where the arena for the bow-sacrifice had been got ready. In the midst of a beautiful and spacious paved area a spotless altar was richly adorned. On all the four sides of this altar were erected elevated and broad seats of gold to be occupied by the princes. Not far behind and surrounding them on all sides shone another circular tier of raised seats, which was of somewhat greater height and beautiful in every way, and where the people of the city might come and take their seat. Close to these were constructed spacious and beautiful gallaries of glistening white, painted in diverse colours, whence ladies might view the spectacle seated in their appropriate places according to their family rank. The children of the town politely showed the Lord all the preparations speaking to Him in gentle words. (1–4)

दो॰—सब सिसु एहि मिस प्रेमबस परसि मनोहर गात ।
तन पुलकहिं अति हरषु हियँ देखि देखि दोउ भ्रात ॥ २२४ ॥

Thus finding an occasion for touching their charming limbs all the children were overwhelmed with love, experienced a thrill all over their body and their heart overflowed with joy on seeing the two brothers again and again. (224)

चौ॰—सिसु सब राम प्रेमबस जाने । प्रीति समेत निकेत बखाने ॥
निज निज रुचि सब लेहिं बोलाई । सहित सनेह जाहिं दोउ भाई ॥ १ ॥
राम देखावहिं अनुजहि रचना । कहि मृदु मधुर मनोहर बचना ॥
लव निमेष महुँ भुवन निकाया । रचइ जासु अनुसासन माया ॥ २ ॥
भगति हेतु सोइ दीनदयाला । चितवत चकित धनुष मखसाला ॥
कौतुक देखि चले गुरु पाहीं । जानि बिलंबु त्रास मन माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
जासु त्रास डर कहुँ डर होई । भजन प्रभाउ देखावत सोई ॥
कहि बातें मृदु मधुर सुहाईं । किए बिदा बालक बरिआईं ॥ ४ ॥

Finding all the children under the spell of affection, Śrī Rāma lovingly extolled the places shown by them. All of them would call the two brothers wherever they pleased and the two brothers went to them out of loving kindness. Śrī Rāma showed to His younger brother the arrangements that had been made there, speaking to him in soft, sweet and agreeable words. He in obedience to whose fiat Māyā brings forth multitudes of universes in the quarter of a second, the same gracious Lord, conquered by devotion, looks with amazement on the arena for the bow-sacrifice. Having seen the whole show the two brothers returned to their Guru; but the thought of their being late disturbed their mind. The Lord, whose sublimity inspires terror into Terror itself thus manifests the glory of devotion. With many kind and courteous phrases they took leave of the youngsters much against the latters' will. (1–4)

दो॰—सभय सप्रेम बिनीत अति सकुच सहित दोउ भाइ ।
गुर पद पंकज नाइ सिर बैठे आयसु पाइ ॥ २२५ ॥

Meekly and most submissively, with a mingled feeling of awe and love, the two brothers bowed their head at the lotus feet of the preceptor (Viśwāmitra) and sat down with his permission. (225)

चौ॰—निसि प्रबेस मुनि आयसु दीन्हा । सबहीं संध्याबंदनु कीन्हा ॥
कहत कथा इतिहास पुरानी । रुचिर रजनि जुग जाम सिरानी ॥ १ ॥
मुनिबर सयन कीन्हि तब जाई । लगे चरन चापन दोउ भाई ॥
जिन्ह के चरन सरोरुह लागी । करत बिबिध जप जोग बिरागी ॥ २ ॥
तेइ दोउ बंधु प्रेम जनु जीते । गुर पद कमल पलोटत प्रीते ॥
बार बार मुनि अग्या दीन्ही । रघुबर जाइ सयन तब कीन्ही ॥ ३ ॥
चापत चरन लखनु उर लाएँ । सभय सप्रेम परम सचु पाएँ ॥
पुनि पुनि प्रभु कह सोवहु ताता । पौढ़े धरि उर पद जलजाता ॥ ४ ॥

At the approach of night the sage (Viśwāmitra) gave the word and all performed their evening devotions; and, while the sage recited old legends and narratives, two watches of the beautiful night passed. The chief of the sages, Viśwāmitra, then retired to his bed; and the two brothers began to rub his feet. The couple whose lotus-feet are sought by men of dispassion muttering various sacred formulae and practising different kinds of Yoga (means of union with God) lovingly rubbed the lotus-like feet of their Guru, conquered as it were by his love. When the sage asked Him again and again, the Chief of Raghu's race went to bed only then. Lakṣmaṇa pressed the Lord's feet to his bosom and caressed them with reverence and love deriving supreme joy from this service. It was only when the Lord repeatedly said, "Retire now, my brother," that he laid himself down cherishing his Brother's lotus-feet in his heart.

(1–4)

दो॰—उठे लखनु निसि बिगत सुनि अरुनसिखा धुनि कान।
गुर तें पहिलेहिं जगतपति जागे रामु सुजान॥ २२६॥

Towards the close of night, at the sound of cock-crow, got up Lakṣmaṇa. The Lord of the universe, the all-wise Śrī Rāma, also woke before His preceptor.

(226)

चौ॰—सकल सौच करि जाइ नहाए। नित्य निबाहि मुनिहि सिर नाए॥
समय जानि गुर आयसु पाई। लेन प्रसून चले दोउ भाई॥ १॥
भूप बागु बर देखेउ जाई। जहँ बसंत रितु रही लोभाई॥
लागे बिटप मनोहर नाना। बरन बरन बर बेलि बिताना॥ २॥
नव पल्लव फल सुमन सुहाए। निज संपति सुर रूख लजाए॥
चातक कोकिल कीर चकोरा। कूजत बिहग नटत कल मोरा॥ ३॥
मध्य बाग सरु सोह सुहावा। मनि सोपान बिचित्र बनावा॥
बिमल सलिलु सरसिज बहुरंगा। जलखग कूजत गुंजत भृंगा॥ ४॥

Having performed all the customary acts of purification, they went and finished their ablutions; and having gone through their daily routine of devotions etc. they bowed before the sage. When the time came, the two brothers took leave of the preceptor and went out to gather flowers. Having gone out they saw the lovely royal garden, enamoured of whose beauty the vernal season had taken its permanent abode there. It was planted with charming trees of various kinds and overhung with beautiful creepers of different colours. Rich in fresh leaf, fruit and flower they put to shame even celestial trees by their wealth. The feathered choir of the Chātakas, cuckoos, parrots and Chakoras warbled and peacocks beautifully danced. In the centre of the garden a lovely lake shone bright with flights of steps made of many-coloured gems. Its limpid water contained lotuses of various colours and was vocal with the cooing of aquatic birds and the humming of bees.

(1–4)

दो॰—बागु तड़ागु बिलोकि प्रभु हरषे बंधु समेत।
परम रम्य आरामु यहु जो रामहि सुख देत॥ २२७॥

Both the Lord and His brother were delighted to behold the garden with its lake. Most lovely must have been that garden which delighted even Śrī Rāma (*lit.*, the delighter of all). (227)

चौ०—चहुँ दिसि चितइ पूँछि मालीगन । लगे लेन दल फूल मुदित मन ॥
तेहि अवसर सीता तहँ आई । गिरिजा पूजन जननि पठाई ॥ १ ॥
संग सखीं सब सुभग सयानीं । गावहिं गीत मनोहर बानीं ॥
सर समीप गिरिजा गृह सोहा । बरनि न जाइ देखि मनु मोहा ॥ २ ॥
मज्जनु करि सर सखिन्ह समेता । गई मुदित मन गौरि निकेता ॥
पूजा कीन्हि अधिक अनुरागा । निज अनुरूप सुभग बरु मागा ॥ ३ ॥
एक सखी सिय संगु बिहाई । गई रही देखन फुलवाई ॥
तेहिं दोउ बंधु बिलोके जाई । प्रेम बिबस सीता पहिं आई ॥ ४ ॥

After looking all about, and with the consent of the gardeners, the two brothers began in high glee to gather leaves and flowers. On that very occasion Sītā too arrived there, having been sent by Her mother to worship Girijā. She was accompanied by Her girl-companions, who were all lovely and intelligent. They sang melodies in an enchanting voice. Close to the lake stood a temple, sacred to Girijā, which was beautiful beyond description, and captivated the mind of those who looked at it. Having taken a dip into the lake with Her companions, Sītā went with a glad heart to Girijā's temple. She offered worship with great devotion and begged of the Goddess a handsome match worthy of Her One of Her companions had strayed away from Her in order to have a look at the garden. She chanced to behold the two brothers and returned to Sītā overwhelmed with love. (1—4)

दो०—तासु दसा देखी सखिन्ह पुलक गात जलु नैन ।
कहु कारनु निज हरष कर पूछहिं सब मृदु बैन ॥ २२८ ॥

When her companions saw her condition, her body thrilling all over and her eyes full of tears, they all asked her in gentle tones, "Tell us what gladdens your heart." (228)

चौ०—देखन बागु कुअँर दुइ आए । बय किसोर सब भाँति सुहाए ॥
स्याम गौर किमि कहौं बखानी । गिरा अनयन नयन बिनु बानी ॥ १ ॥
सुनि हरषीं सब सखीं सयानी । सिय हियँ अति उतकंठा जानी ॥
एक कहइ नृपसुत तेइ आली । सुने जे मुनि सँग आए काली ॥ २ ॥
जिन्ह निज रूप मोहनी डारी । कीन्हे स्वबस नगर नर नारी ॥
बरनत छबि जहँ तहँ सब लोगू । अवसि देखिअहिं देखन जोगू ॥ ३ ॥
तासु बचन अति सियहि सोहाने । दरस लागि लोचन अकुलाने ॥
चली अग्र करि प्रिय सखि सोई । प्रीति पुरातन लखइ न कोई ॥ ४ ॥

"Two princes have come to see the garden, both of tender age and charming in every way, one dark of hue and the other fair; how shall I describe them? For speech is sightless, while the eyes are mute." All the clever maidens

were delighted to hear this. Perceiving the intense longing in Sītā's bosom one of them said, "They must be the two princes, my dear, who, I was told, arrived yesterday with the sage (Viśwāmitra), and who have captivated the heart of men and women of the city by casting the spell of their beauty. All are talking of their loveliness here, there and everywhere. We must see them, for they are worth seeing." The words of this damsel highly pleased Sītā; Her eyes were restless for the sight of the princes. With that kind friend to lead the way She followed; no one knew that Hers was an old love.

(1—4)

दो०—सुमिरि सीय नारद बचन उपजी प्रीति पुनीत ।
चकित बिलोकति सकल दिसि जनु सिसु मृगी सभीत ॥ २२९ ॥

Recollecting Nārada's words She was filled with innocent love; and with anxious eyes She gazed all round like a startled fawn.

(229)

चौ०—कंकन किंकिनि नूपुर धुनि सुनि । कहत लखन सन रामु हृदयँ गुनि ॥
मानहुँ मदन दुंदुभी दीन्ही । मनसा बिस्व बिजय कहँ कीन्ही ॥ १ ॥
अस कहि फिरि चितए तेहि ओरा । सिय मुख ससि भए नयन चकोरा ॥
भए बिलोचन चारु अचंचल । मनहुँ सकुचि निमि तजे दिगंचल ॥ २ ॥
देखि सीय सोभा सुखु पावा । हृदयँ सराहत बचनु न आवा ॥
जनु बिरंचि सब निज निपुनाई । बिरचि बिस्व कहँ प्रगटि देखाई ॥ ३ ॥
सुंदरता कहुँ सुंदर करई । छबिगृहँ दीपसिखा जनु बरई ॥
सब उपमा कबि रहे जुठारी । केहिं पटतरौं बिदेहकुमारी ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing the tinkling of bangles, the small bells tied round the waist and the anklets Śrī Rāma thought within Himself and then said to Lakṣmaṇa, "It seems as if Cupid has sounded his kettledrum with intent to conquer the universe." So saying He looked once again in the same direction (whence the sound came); and lo ! His eyes feasted themselves on Sītā's countenance even as the *Chakora* bird gazes on the moon. His charming eyes became motionless, as if Nimi* (the god of winking) had left the eyelids out of shyness. Śrī Rāma was filled with rapture to behold Sītā's beauty; He admired it in His heart, but utterance failed Him. He felt as if the Creator had put his whole creative skill in visible form and demonstrated it to the world at large. "She lends charm to Charm itself," He said to Himself, "and looks as if a flame of light is burning in a house of beauty. The similes already employed by the poets are all stale and hackneyed; to whom shall I liken the daughter of Videha ?"

(1—4)

दो०—सिय सोभा हियँ बरनि प्रभु आपनि दसा बिचारि ।
बोले सुचि मन अनुज सन बचन समय अनुहारि ॥ २३० ॥

* Nimi was a forbear of King Janaka. On his death his spirit obtained a seat on the eye-lids of human beings and has ever since remained there. The poet here figuratively attributes the motionlessness of Śrī Rāma's eyelids to the sudden departure therefrom of Nimi, who as a forbear of Janaka is described as loth to witness this exchange of pure love between Rāma and Sītā.

Thus describing to Himself Sītā's loveliness and reflecting on His own condition the Lord innocently spoke to His younger brother in terms appropriate to the occasion:— (230)

चौ०—तात जनकतनया यह सोई । धनुषजग्य जेहि कारन होई ॥
पूजन गौरि सखीं लै आईं । करत प्रकासु फिरइ फुलवाईं ॥ १ ॥
जासु बिलोकि अलौकिक सोभा । सहज पुनीत मोर मनु छोभा ॥
सो सबु कारन जान बिधाता । फरकहिं सुभद अंग सुनु भ्राता ॥ २ ॥
रघुबंसिन्ह कर सहज सुभाऊ । मनु कुपंथ पगु धरइ न काऊ ॥
मोहि अतिसय प्रतीति मन केरी । जेहिं सपनेहुँ परनारि न हेरी ॥ ३ ॥
जिन्ह कै लहहिं न रिपु रन पीठी । नहिं पावहिं परतिय मनु डीठी ॥
मंगन लहहिं न जिन्ह कै नाहीं । ते नरबर थोरे जग माहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"Brother, she is no other than the daughter of King Janaka, for whom the bow-sacrifice is being arranged. She has been escorted by her girl-companions to worship Goddess Gaurī and is moving about in the garden diffusing light all about her. My heart, which is naturally pure, is agitated by the sight of Her transcendent beauty. The reason of all this is known to God alone; but I tell you, brother, my right limbs are throbbing, which is an index of coming good fortune. It is a natural trait with the race of Raghu that they never set their heart on evil courses. As for Myself I am fully confident of My mind which has never sought another's wife even in a dream. Rare in this world are those noble men who never turn their back on the foe in battle nor give their heart to or cast an amorous glance on another's wife, and from whom no beggar meets with a rebuff.

(1—4)

दो०—करत बतकही अनुज सन मन सिय रूप लोभान ।
मुख सरोज मकरंद छबि करइ मधुप इव पान ॥ २३१ ॥

While Śrī Rāma was talking to His younger brother in this strain, His mind, which was enamoured of Sītā's beauty, was all the time drinking in the loveliness of Her countenance, like a bee sucking the nectar from a lotus. (231)

चौ०—चितवति चकित चहूँ दिसि सीता । कहँ गए नृपकिसोर मनु चिंता ॥
जहँ बिलोक मृग सावक नैनी । जनु तहँ बरिस कमल सित श्रेनी ॥ १ ॥
लता ओट तब सखिन्ह लखाए । स्यामल गौर किसोर सुहाए ॥
देखि रूप लोचन ललचाने । हरषे जनु निज निधि पहिचाने ॥ २ ॥
थके नयन रघुपति छबि देखें । पलकन्हिहूँ परिहरीं निमेषें ॥
अधिक सनेहँ देह भै भोरी । सरद ससिहि जनु चितव चकोरी ॥ ३ ॥
लोचन मग रामहि उर आनी । दीन्हे पलक कपाट सयानी ॥
जब सिय सखिन्ह प्रेमबस जानी । कहि न सकहिं कछु मन सकुचानी ॥ ४ ॥

Sītā looked timidly all round; Her mind was at a loss as to where the princes had gone. Wherever the fawn-eyed princess cast Her glance, a continuous stream of white lotuses seemed to rain there. Her companions then pointed out

to Her the two lovely brothers, the one dark, the other fair of hue, standing behind a fence of creepers. Beholding the beauty of the two princes Her eyes were filled with greed; they rejoiced as if they had discovered their long-lost treasure. The eyes became motionless at the sight of Śrī Rāma's loveliness; the eyelids too forgot to fall. Due to excess of love Her body-consciousness began to fail; it looked as if a Chakora bird was gazing at the autumnal moon. Receiving Śrī Rāma into the heart through the passage of the eyes, She cleverly shut Him up there by closing the doors of Her eyelids. When Her girl-companions found Sītā overpowered with love, they were too much abashed to utter a word (1—4)

दो०—लताभवन तें प्रगट भे तेहि अवसर दोउ भाइ ।
निकसे जनु जुग बिमल बिधु जलद पटल बिलगाइ ॥ २३२ ॥

At that very moment the two brothers emerged from a bower. It looked as if a pair of spotless moons had shone forth tearing the veil of cloud. (232)

चौ०—सोभा सीवँ सुभग दोउ बीरा । नील पीत जलजाभ सरीरा ॥
मोरपंख सिर सोहत नीके । गुच्छ बीच बिच कुसुम कली के ॥ १ ॥
भाल तिलक श्रमबिंदु सुहाए । श्रवन सुभग भूषन छबि छाए ॥
बिकट भृकुटि कच घूघरवारे । नव सरोज लोचन रतनारे ॥ २ ॥
चारु चिबुक नासिका कपोला । हास बिलास लेत मनु मोला ॥
मुखछबि कहि न जाइ मोहि पाहीं । जो बिलोकि बहु काम लजाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
उर मनि माल कंबु कल गीवा । काम कलभ कर भुज बलसींवा ॥
सुमन समेत बाम कर दोना । सावँर कुअँर सखी सुठि लोना ॥ ४ ॥

The two gallant heroes were the very perfection of beauty; their bodies resembled in hue a blue and a yellow lotus respectively. Charming peacock-feathers adorned their head, which had bunches of flower-buds stuck here and there. A sectarian mark and beads of perspiration glistened on their brow; while graceful pendants shed their lustre on their ears. With arched eyebrows and curly locks, eyes red as a lotus-bud and a lovely chin, nose and cheeks, their gracious smile was soul-enthralling. The beauty of their countenance was more than I can describe; it would put to shame a myriad Cupids. They had a string of jewels on their breast; their lovely neck resembled a conch-shell in its spiral shape; while their mighty arms vied with the trunk of a young elephant, who was the very incarnation of Cupid. With a cup of leaves full of flowers in His left hand the dark-hued prince, my dear, is most charming. (1—4)

दो०—केहरि कटि पट पीत धर सुषमा सील निधान ।
देखि भानुकुलभूषनहि बिसरा सखिन्ह अपान ॥ २३३ ॥

Beholding the Ornament of the solar race, who had a slender waist like that of a lion and was clad in yellow, and who was the very embodiment of beauty and amiability, Sītā's companions forgot their very existence. (233)

चौ०—धरि धीरजु एक आलि सयानी। सीता सन बोली गहि पानी॥
बहुरि गौरि कर ध्यान करेहू। भूपकिसोर देखि किन लेहू॥ १॥
सकुचि सीयँ तब नयन उघारे। सनमुख दोउ रघुसिंघ निहारे॥
नख सिख देखि राम कै सोभा। सुमिरि पिता पनु मनु अति छोभा॥ २॥
परबस सखिन्ह लखी जब सीता। भयउ गहरु सब कहहिं सभीता॥
पुनि आउब एहि बेरिआँ काली। अस कहि मन बिहसी एक आली॥ ३॥
गूढ़ गिरा सुनि सिय सकुचानी। भयउ बिलंबु मातु भय मानी॥
धरि बड़ि धीर रामु उर आने। फिरी अपनपउ पितुबस जाने॥ ४॥

Recovering herself, one of Her clever companions grasped Sītā by the hand and said to Her, "Meditate on Gaurī afterwards; why not behold the princes just now?" Sītā then bashfully opened Her eyes and saw the two lions of Raghu's race opposite Herself. Surveying Śrī Rāma's beauty from head to foot in the reverse order*, and remembering Her father's vow she felt much perturbed. When Sītā's companions saw Her thus overcome with love, they all cried in alarm: "We are late already." "Let us come again at this very hour tomorrow!" So saying one of them smiled within herself. Sītā blushed at this pregnant remark. She got afraid of Her mother; for She felt it was already late. Recovering Herself with considerable effort She received Śrī Rāma into Her heart and conscious of Her dependence on Her sire returned home. (1—4)

दो०—देखन मिस मृग बिहग तरु फिरइ बहोरि बहोरि।
निरखि निरखि रघुबीर छबि बाढ़इ प्रीति न थोरि॥ २३४॥

Under pretence of looking at a deer, bird or tree She turned again and again; and each time She gazed on the beauteous Hero of Raghu's race, Her love waxed not a little. (234)

चौ०—जानि कठिन सिवचाप बिसूरति। चली राखि उर स्यामल मूरति॥
प्रभु जब जात जानकी जानी। सुख सनेह सोभा गुन खानी॥ १॥
परम प्रेममय मृदु मसि कीन्ही। चारु चित्त भीतीं लिखि लीन्ही॥
गई भवानी भवन बहोरी। बंदि चरन बोली कर जोरी॥ २॥
जय जय गिरिबरराज किसोरी। जय महेस मुख चंद चकोरी॥
जय गजबदन षडानन माता। जगत जननि दामिनि दुति गाता॥ ३॥
नहिं तव आदि मध्य अवसाना। अमित प्रभाउ बेदु नहिं जाना॥
भव भव बिभव पराभव कारिनि। बिस्व बिमोहनि स्वबस बिहारिनि॥ ४॥

---

*Girls in India are coy by their very nature and would not have the audacity to look straight into the eyes of a suitor. Sītā, who is the very embodiment of feminine virtues and the ideal of Indian womanhood, is, therefore, depicted here as beginning Her survey of Śrī Rāma's beauty from His feet and gradually passing Her eyes to His head. It is unidiomatic in English to speak of one scanning a person from 'foot to head'; hence the order had to be reversed in the rendering. It was, however, necessary to point out this radical difference between the Western and Indian cultures; and hence the words 'in the reverse order' have been added to keep the sense of the original intact, while taking care not to allow the English idiom to suffer.

Drooping at the thought of the unyielding bow of Śiva, She proceeded with the image of the swarthy form in Her heart. When the Lord perceived that Janaka's Daughter, a fountain of bliss, affection, grace and goodness, was going, He sketched Her on the sheet of His heart with the soft ink of supreme love. Sītā then sought Bhavānī's temple and, adoring Her feet, prayed to Her with joined palms: "Glory, all glory to You, O Daughter of the mountain-king! Glory to You, who gaze on the countenance of the great Lord Śiva as a Chakora bird on the moon. Glory to You, O Mother of the elephant-headed Gaṇeśa and the six-faced Kārtikeya and mother of the universe with limbs shining as lightning. You have no beginning, middle or end; Your infinite glory is a mystery even to the Vedas. You are responsible for the birth, maintenance and destruction of the universe; You enchant the whole universe and carry on Your sports independently of others. (1–4)

दो०—पतिदेवता सुतीय महुँ मातु प्रथम तव रेख।
महिमा अमित न सकहिं कहि सहस सारदा सेष ॥ २३५ ॥

"Of all good women who adore their husband as a god, Mother, You rank foremost. Your immeasurable greatness is more than a thousand Śāradās and Śeṣas could tell. (235)

चौ०—सेवत तोहि सुलभ फल चारी। बरदायनी पुरारि पिआरी ॥
देबि पूजि पद कमल तुम्हारे। सुर नर मुनि सब होहिं सुखारे ॥ १ ॥
मोर मनोरथु जानहु नीकें। बसहु सदा उर पुर सबही कें ॥
कीन्हेउँ प्रगट न कारन तेहीं। अस कहि चरन गहे बैदेहीं ॥ २ ॥
बिनय प्रेम बस भई भवानी। खसी माल मूरति मुसुकानी ॥
सादर सियँ प्रसादु सिर धरेऊ। बोली गौरि हरषु हियँ भरेऊ ॥ ३ ॥
सुनु सिय सत्य असीस हमारी। पूजिहि मन कामना तुम्हारी ॥
नारद बचन सदा सुचि साचा। सो बरु मिलिहि जाहिं मनु राचा ॥ ४ ॥

"The four-fold rewards of life (viz., religious merit, worldly riches, sensuous enjoyment and Liberation) are easily attainable through Your service, O bestower of boons, beloved of Śiva (the Slayer of Tripura)! All who adore Your lotus-feet, O Shining One, attain happiness, be they gods, men or sages. You know well my heart's longing, since You ever dwell in the town of every heart. That is why I have refrained from openly declaring it." With these words Videha's Daughter clasped the feet of the image. Bhavānī was overcome by Her meekness and devotion; the wreath on the image dropped and the idol smiled. Sītā reverently placed the divine gift on Her head. Gaurī's heart was filled with delight while She spoke, "Hear, Sītā, my infallible blessing: Your heart's desire shall be accomplished. Nārada's words are ever faultless and true; the suitor on whom Your heart is set shall, indeed, be Yours. (1–4)

छं०—मनु जाहिं राचेउ मिलिहि सो बरु सहज सुंदर साँवरो।
करुना निधान सुजान सीलु सनेहु जानत रावरो ॥

एहि भाँति गौरि असीस सुनि सिय सहित हियँ हरषीं अली ।
तुलसी भवानिहि पूजि पुनि पुनि मुदित मन मंदिर चली ॥

"The dark-complexioned and naturally handsome suitor of whom You are enamoured shall, indeed, be Yours. The gracious and omniscient Lord is aware of Your fidelity and love." Sītā and all Her companions were delighted at heart to hear this blessing from Gaurī's lips. Worshipping Goddess Bhavānī again and again Sītā, says Tulasīdāsa, returned to Her abode, rejoicing in Her heart.

सो०—जानि गौरि अनुकूल सिय हिय हरषु न जाइ कहि ।
मंजुल मंगल मूल बाम अंग फरकन लगे ॥ २३६ ॥

Finding Gaurī favourably disposed towards Her, Sītā was more glad of heart than words can tell. Her left limbs began to throb, indicating Her good fortune. (236)

चौ०—हृदयँ सराहत सीय लोनाई । गुर समीप गवने दोउ भाई ॥
राम कहा सबु कौसिक पाहीं । सरल सुभाउ छुअत छल नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
सुमन पाइ मुनि पूजा कीन्ही । पुनि असीस दुहु भाइन्ह दीन्ही ॥
सुफल मनोरथ होहुँ तुम्हारे । रामु लखनु सुनि भए सुखारे ॥ २ ॥
करि भोजनु मुनिबर बिग्यानी । लगे कहन कछु कथा पुरानी ॥
बिगत दिवसु गुरु आयसु पाई । संध्या करन चले दोउ भाई ॥ ३ ॥
प्राची दिसि ससि उयउ सुहावा । सिय मुख सरिस देखि सुखु पावा ॥
बहुरि बिचारु कीन्ह मन माहीं । सीय बदन सम हिमकर नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Inwardly praising Sītā's beauty, the two brothers returned to their Guru (Viśwāmitra). Śrī Rāma related everything to Kauśika; for He was innocent of heart and free from all guile. Having got the flowers the sage performed his devotions and then blessed the two brothers, saying, "May your heart's desire be accomplished." Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were glad to hear the benediction. After finishing his meals the great and illumined hermit, Viśwāmitra, began to recite old legends. The day was thus spent; and obtaining the Guru's permission the two brothers proceeded to say their evening prayers. In the meantime the charming moon rose in the eastern horizon; perceiving that her orb resembled Sītā's face Śrī Rāma felt happy. The Lord then reasoned within Himself, "The queen of night bears no resemblance to Sītā. (1—4)

दो०—जनमु सिंधु पुनि बंधु बिषु दिन मलीन सकलंक ।
सिय मुख समता पाव किमि चंदु बापुरो रंक ॥ २३७ ॥

"Born of the ocean (with its salt water), with poison for her brother, dim and obscure by the day and with a dark spot in her orb, how can the poor and wretched moon be matched with Sītā's countenance ?* (237)

* The moon is one of the fourteen jewels (treasures of the world) that were churned out of the ocean by the joint efforts of the gods and demons at the dawn of creation. It is to this Puranic legend that the Lord refers to above. The very first product of this churning was poison, which was swallowed by Lord Śiva. It is in this sense that the moon is spoken of as having poison for a brother.

चौ०—घटइ बढ़इ बिरहिनि दुखदाई । ग्रसइ राहु निज संधिहिं पाई ॥
कोक सोकप्रद पंकज द्रोही । अवगुन बहुत चंद्रमा तोही ॥ १ ॥
बैदेही मुख पटतर दीन्हे । होइ दोपु बड़ अनुचित कीन्हे ॥
सिय मुख छबि बिधु ब्याज बखानी । गुर पहिं चले निसा बड़ि जानी ॥ २ ॥
करि मुनि चरन सरोज प्रनामा । आयसु पाइ कीन्ह बिश्रामा ॥
बिगत निसा रघुनायक जागे । बंधु बिलोकि कहन अस लागे ॥ ३ ॥
उयउ अरुन अवलोकहु ताता । पंकज कोक लोक सुखदाता ॥
बोले लखनु जोरि जुग पानी । प्रभु प्रभाउ सूचक मृदु बानी ॥ ४ ॥

"Again, the moon waxes and wanes; she is the curse of lovesick damsels and is devoured by Rāhu when she crosses the latter's orbit. She causes anguish to the Chakravāka (the ruddy goose) and withers the lotus. O moon, there are numerous faults in you. One would incur the blame of having done a highly improper act by comparing you with the countenance of Videha's daughter." Thus finding in the moon a pretext for extolling the beauty of Sītā's countenance and perceiving that the night had far advanced, Śrī Rāma returned to His Guru; and bowing at the sage's lotus feet and receiving his permission He retired to rest. At the close of night the Lord of Raghus woke; and looking towards His brother He began to speak thus, "Lo, brother, the day has dawned to the delight of the lotus, the Chakravāka and the whole world." Joining both of his palms Lakṣmaṇa gently spoke the following words indicative of the Lord's glory:— (1–4)

दो०—अरुनोदयँ सकुचे कुमुद उडगन जोति मलीन ।
जिमि तुम्हार आगमन सुनि भए नृपति बलहीन ॥ २३८ ॥

"The day having dawned, the lily has faded and the brightness of the stars is dimmed, just as at the news of Your arrival all the princes (assembled here) have grown faint. (238)

चौ०—नृप सब नखत करहिं उजिआरी । टारि न सकहिं चाप तम भारी ॥
कमल कोक मधुकर खग नाना । हरषे सकल निसा अवसाना ॥ १ ॥
ऐसेहिं प्रभु सब भगत तुम्हारे । होइहहिं टूटें धनुष सुखारे ॥
उयउ भानु बिनु श्रम तम नासा । दुरे नखत जग तेजु प्रकासा ॥ २ ॥
रबि निज उदय ब्याज रघुराया । प्रभु प्रतापु सब नृपन्ह दिखाया ॥
तव भुज बल महिमा उदघाटी । प्रगटी धनु बिघटन परिपाटी ॥ ३ ॥
बंधु बचन सुनि प्रभु मुसुकाने । होइ सुचि सहज पुनीत नहाने ॥
नित्यक्रिया करि गुरु पहिं आए । चरन सरोज सुभग सिर नाए ॥ ४ ॥
सतानंदु तब जनक बोलाए । कौसिक मुनि पहिं तुरत पठाए ॥
जनक बिनय तिन्ह आइ सुनाई । हरषे बोलि लिए दोउ भाई ॥ ५ ॥

"Though twinkling like stars, all the princes put together are unable to lift the thick darkness in the form of the bow. And just as lotuses and bees and the Chakravāka and various other birds rejoice over the termination

of night, even so, my lord, all Your devotees will be glad when the bow is broken. Lo, the sun is up and the darkness has automatically disappeared; the stars have vanished out of sight and light flashes upon the world. Under pretence of its rising, O Lord of Raghus, the sun has demonstrated to all the princes the glory of my lord (Yourself). It is in order to reveal the might of Your arms that the process of breaking the bow has been set into operation." The Lord smiled at these remarks of His brother. He who is pure by His very nature then performed the daily acts of purification and bathed, and after finishing the daily routine of prayer etc., called on His Guru and the two brothers bowed their graceful heads at his lotus feet. Meanwhile King Janaka summoned his preceptor Śatānanda and sent him at once to the sage Kauśika. Śatānanda communicated to Viśwāmitra Janaka's humble submission and Viśwāmitra gladly sent for the two brothers. (1—5)

दो०—सतानंद पद बंदि प्रभु बैठे गुर पहिं जाइ ।
चलहु तात मुनि कहेउ तब पठवा जनक बोलाइ ॥ २३९ ॥

Adoring Śatānanda's feet the Lord went and sat down by His Guru; the sage then said, "Come, my son; Janaka has sent for us. (239)

[PAUSE 8 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

[PAUSE 2 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—सीय स्वयंबरु देखिअ जाई । ईसु काहि धौं देइ बड़ाई ॥
लखन कहा जस भाजनु सोई । नाथ कृपा तव जापर होई ॥ १ ॥
हरषे मुनि सब सुनि बर बानी । दीन्हि असीस सबहिं सुखु मानी ॥
पुनि मुनिबृंद समेत कृपाला । देखन चले धनुषमख साला ॥ २ ॥
रंगभूमि आए दोउ भाई । असि सुधि सब पुरबासिन्ह पाई ॥
चले सकल गृह काज बिसारी । बाल जुबान जरठ नर नारी ॥ ३ ॥
देखी जनक भीर भै भारी । सुचि सेवक सब लिए हँकारी ॥
तुरत सकल लोगन्ह पहिं जाहू । आसन उचित देहु सब काहू ॥ ४ ॥

"Let us go and see how Sītā elects her husband; we have yet to see whom Providence chooses to honour." Said Lakṣmaṇa, "He alone deserves glory, my lord, who enjoys your favour." The whole company of hermits rejoiced to hear these apt words and with a delighted heart they all gave their blessing to him. Accompanied by the whole throng of hermits the gracious Lord then proceeded to visit the arena intended for the bow-sacrifice. When the residents of the town got the news that the two brothers had reached the arena, they all sallied forth, oblivious of their homes and duties,—men and women, young and old and even children. When Janaka saw that a huge crowd had collected there, he sent for all his trusted servants and said, "Go and see all the people at once and marshal them to their proper seats." (1—4)

दो०—कहि मृदु बचन बिनीत तिन्ह बैठारे नर नारि।
उत्तम मध्यम नीच लघु निज निज थल अनुहारि ॥ २४० ॥

Addressing soft and polite words to the citizens, the servants seated them all, both men and women, in their appropriate places, whether noble or middling, humble or low. (240)

चौ०—राजकुअँर तेहि अवसर आए। मनहुँ मनोहरता तन छाए ॥
गुन सागर नागर बर बीरा। सुंदर स्यामल गौर सरीरा ॥ १ ॥
राज समाज बिराजत रूरे। उडगन महुँ जनु जुग बिधु पूरे ॥
जिन्ह कें रही भावना जैसी। प्रभु मूरति तिन्ह देखी तैसी ॥ २ ॥
देखहिं रूप महा रनधीरा। मनहुँ बीर रसु धरें सरीरा ॥
डरे कुटिल नृप प्रभुहि निहारी। मनहुँ भयानक मूरति भारी ॥ ३ ॥
रहे असुर छल छोनिप बेषा। तिन्ह प्रभु प्रगट कालसम देखा ॥
पुरबासिन्ह देखे दोउ भाई। नरभूषन लोचन सुखदाई ॥ ४ ॥

Meanwhile there arrived the two princes, the very abodes of beauty as it were, both oceans of goodness, polished in manners and gallant heroes, charming of forms, the one dark and the other fair. Shining bright in the galaxy of princes, they looked like two full moons in a circle of stars. Everyone looked on the Lord's form according to the conception each had about Him. Those who were surpassingly staunch in battle gazed on His form as though He was the heroic sentiment personified. The wicked kings trembled at the sight of the Lord as if He had a most terrible form. The demons, who were cunningly disguised as princes, beheld the Lord as Death in visible form; while the citizens regarded the two brothers as the ornaments of humanity and the delight of their eyes. (1—4)

दो०—नारि बिलोकहिं हरषि हियँ निज निज रुचि अनुरूप।
जनु सोहत सिंगार धरि मूरति परम अनूप ॥ २४१ ॥

With joy in their heart the women saw Him according to the attitude of mind each had towards Him, as if the erotic sentiment itself had appeared in an utterly incomparable form. (241)

चौ०—बिदुषन्ह प्रभु बिराटमय दीसा। बहु मुख कर पग लोचन सीसा ॥
जनक जाति अवलोकहिं कैसें। सजन सगे प्रिय लागहिं जैसें ॥ १ ॥
सहित बिदेह बिलोकहिं रानी। सिसु सम प्रीति न जाति बखानी ॥
जोगिन्ह परम तत्त्वमय भासा। सांत सुद्ध सम सहज प्रकासा ॥ २ ॥
हरिभगतन्ह देखे दोउ भ्राता। इष्टदेव इव सब सुख दाता ॥
रामहि चितव भायँ जेहि सीया। सो सनेहु सुखु नहिं कथनीया ॥ ३ ॥
उर अनुभवति न कहि सक सोऊ। कवन प्रकार कहै कबि कोऊ ॥
एहि बिधि रहा जाहि जस भाऊ। तेहिं तस देखेउ कोसलराऊ ॥ ४ ॥

The wise saw the Lord in His cosmic form, with many faces, hands, feet, eyes and heads. And how did He appear to Janaka's kinsmen? Like one's own beloved relation. The queen, no less than the king, regarded Him with unspeakable love like a dear child. To the Yogīs (those ever united with God) He shone forth as no other than the highest truth, placid, unsullied, equipoised, and resplendent by Its very nature. The devotees of Śrī Hari beheld the two brothers as their beloved deity, the fountain of all joy. The emotion of love and joy with which Sītā gazed on Śrī Rāma was ineffable. She felt the emotion in Her breast, but could not utter it; how, then, can a poet describe it? In this way everyone regarded the Lord of Ayodhyā according to the attitude of mind each had towards Him. (1—4)

दो०—राजत राज समाज महुँ कोसलराज किसोर ।
सुंदर स्यामल गौर तन बिस्व बिलोचन चोर ॥ २४२ ॥

Thus shone in the assembly of kings the two lovely princes of Ayodhyā, the one dark and the other fair of form, catching the eyes of the whole universe. (242)

चौ०—सहज मनोहर मूरति दोऊ । कोटि काम उपमा लघु सोऊ ॥
सरद चंद निंदक मुख नीके । नीरज नयन भावते जी के ॥ १ ॥
चितवनि चारु मार मनु हरनी । भावति हृदय जाति नहिं बरनी ॥
कल कपोल श्रुति कुंडल लोला । चिबुक अधर सुंदर मृदु बोला ॥ २ ॥
कुमुदबंधु कर निंदक हाँसा । भृकुटी बिकट मनोहर नासा ॥
भाल बिसाल तिलक झलकाहीं । कच बिलोकि अलि अवलि लजाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
पीत चौतनीं सिरन्हि सुहाईं । कुसुम कलीं बिच बीच बनाईं ॥
रेखें रुचिर कंबु कल गीवाँ । जनु त्रिभुवन सुषमा की सीवाँ ॥ ४ ॥

Both were embodiments of natural grace; even millions of Cupids were a poor match for them. Their charming faces mocked the autumnal moon, and their lotus-like eyes were soul-ravishing. Their winning glances captivated the heart of even Cupid; they were so unspeakably endearing. With beautiful cheeks, ears adorned with swinging pendants, a charming chin and lips and a sweet voice, their smile ridiculed the moonbeams. With arched eyebrows and a beautiful nose, the sacred mark shone on their broad forehead, and their locks of hair put to shame a swarm of bees. Yellow caps of a rectangular shape, which were embroidered here and there with figures of flower-buds, adorned their heads. Their necks, which vied in their spiral form with a conch-shell bore a triple line, which constituted as it were the high watermark of beauty in all the three worlds. (1—4)

दो०—कुंजर मनि कंठा कलित उरन्हि तुलसिका माल ।
बृषभ कंध केहरि ठवनि बलनिधि बाहु बिसाल ॥ २४३ ॥

Their breast was adorned with necklaces of pearls found in an elephant's forehead and wreaths of Tulasī (basil) leaves. With shoulders resembling the hump of a bull they stood like lions and had mighty long arms. (243)

चौ०—कटि तूनीर पीत पट बाँधें । कर सर धनुष बाम बर काँधें ॥
पीत जग्य उपबीत सुहाए । नख सिख मंजु महाछबि छाए ॥ १ ॥
देखि लोग सब भए सुखारे । एकटक लोचन चलत न तारे ॥
हरषे जनकु देखि दोउ भाई । मुनि पद कमल गहे तब जाई ॥ २ ॥
करि बिनती निज कथा सुनाई । रंग अवनि सब मुनिहि देखाई ॥
जहँ जहँ जाहिं कुअँर बर दोऊ । तहँ तहँ चकित चितव सबु कोऊ ॥ ३ ॥
निज निज रुख रामहि सबु देखा । कोउ न जान कछु मरमु बिसेषा ॥
भलि रचना मुनि नृप सन कहेऊ । राजाँ मुदित महासुख लहेऊ ॥ ४ ॥

They bore at their back a quiver secured with a yellow cloth wrapped round their waist, and held an arrow in their right hand; while a bow and a charming sacred thread, also of yellow tint, were slung across their left shoulder. In short, the two princes were lovely from head to foot and were the very embodiments of great charm. Everyone who saw them felt delighted; people gazed at them with unwinking eyes and their pupils too did not move. King Janaka himself rejoiced to behold the two brothers; presently he went and clasped the sage's lotus feet. Paying him homage he related to him his story and showed him round the whole arena. Whithersoever the two elegant princes betook themselves, all regarded them with wonder. Every man found Śrī Rāma facing himself; but none could perceive the great mystery behind it. The sage told the king that the arrangements were splendid; and the king was highly satisfied and pleased to hear this. (1–4)

दो०—सब मंचन्ह तें मंचु एक सुंदर बिसद बिसाल ।
मुनि समेत दोउ बंधु तहँ बैठारे महिपाल ॥ २४४ ॥

Of all the tiers of raised seats one was beautiful, bright and capacious above all the rest; the king seated the two brothers along with the sage thereon. (244)

चौ०—प्रभुहि देखि सब नृप हियँ हारे । जनु राकेस उदय भएँ तारे ॥
असि प्रतीति सब के मन माहीं । राम चाप तोरब सक नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
बिनु भंजेहुँ भव धनुषु बिसाला । मेलिहि सीय राम उर माला ॥
अस बिचारि गवनहु घर भाई । जसु प्रतापु बलु तेजु गवाँई ॥ २ ॥
बिहसे अपर भूप सुनि बानी । जे अबिबेक अंध अभिमानी ॥
तोरेहुँ धनुषु ब्याहु अवगाहा । बिनु तोरें को कुअँरि बिआहा ॥ ३ ॥
एक बार कालउ किन होऊ । सिय हित समर जितब हम सोऊ ॥
यह सुनि अवर महिप मुसुकाने । धरमसील हरिभगत सयाने ॥ ४ ॥

All the kings were disheartened at the sight of the Lord, just as stars fade away with the rising of the full moon. For they all felt inwardly assured that Rāma would undoubtedly break the bow; or, even if the huge bow of Śiva proved too strong for Him, that Sītā would still place the garland of victory round His neck. They, therefore, said to one another, "Realizing

this, brothers, let us turn homewards, casting to the winds all glory, fame, strength and pride." Other princes, who were blinded with ignorance and pride, laughed at this and said, "Union with the princess is a far cry for Rāma, even if he succeeds in breaking the bow; who, then, can wed her without breaking it? Should Death himself for once come forth against us, even him we would conquer in battle for Sītā's sake." At this other princes, who were pious and sensible and devoted to Śrī Hari, smiled and said:— (1—4)

सो०—सीय बिआहबि राम गरब दूरि करि नृपन्ह के ।
जीति को सक संग्राम दसरथ के रन बाँकुरे ॥ २४५ ॥

"Rāma will certainly marry Sītā to the discomfiture of these arrogant princes; for who can conquer in battle the valiant sons of Daśaratha? (245)

चौ०—ब्यर्थ मरहु जनि गाल बजाई । मन मोदकन्हि कि भूख बुताई ॥
सिख हमारि सुनि परम पुनीता । जगदंबा जानहु जियँ सीता ॥ १ ॥
जगत पिता रघुपतिहि बिचारी । भरि लोचन छबि लेहु निहारी ॥
सुंदर सुखद सकल गुन रासी । ए दोउ बंधु संभु उर बासी ॥ २ ॥
सुधा समुद्र समीप बिहाई । मृगजलु निरखि मरहु कत धाई ॥
करहु जाइ जा कहुँ जोइ भावा । हम तौ आजु जनम फलु पावा ॥ ३ ॥
अस कहि भले भूप अनुरागे । रूप अनूप बिलोकन लागे ॥
देखहिं सुर नभ चढ़े बिमाना । बरषहिं सुमन करहिं कल गाना ॥ ४ ॥

"Do not thus brag and throw away your lives in vain: hunger cannot be satiated with imaginary sweets. Listen to this my most salutary advice: be inwardly assured that Sītā is no other than the Mother of the universe. And recognizing the Lord of Raghus as the father of the universe, feast your eyes to their fill on His beauty. Fountains of joy and embodiments of all virtues, these two charming brothers have their abode in Śambhu's heart. Leaving an ocean of nectar, which is so near, why should you run in pursuit of a mirage and court death? Or else do whatever pleases you individually; we for our part have reaped today the fruit of our human birth." So saying, the good kings turned to gaze with affection on the picture of incomparable beauty; while in heaven the gods witnessed the spectacle from their aerial cars, and raining down flowers sang in melodious strains. (1—4)

दो०—जानि सुअवसरु सीय तब पठई जनक बोलाइ ।
चतुर सखीं सुंदर सकल सादर चलीं लवाइ ॥ २४६ ॥

Finding it an appropriate occasion Janaka then sent for Sītā; and Her companions, all lovely and accomplished, escorted Her with due honour. (246)

चौ०—सिय सोभा नहिं जाइ बखानी । जगदंबिका रूप गुन खानी ॥
उपमा सकल मोहि लघु लागीं । प्राकृत नारि अंग अनुरागीं ॥ १ ॥
सिय बरनिअ तेइ उपमा देई । कुकबि कहाइ अजसु को लेई ॥
जौं पटतरिअ तीय सम सीया । जग असि जुबति कहाँ कमनीया ॥ २ ॥

गिरा मुखर तन अरध भवानी । रति अति दुखित अतनु पति जानी ॥
बिष बारुनी बंधु प्रिय जेही । कहिअ रमासम किमि बैदेही ॥ ३ ॥
जौं छबि सुधा पयोनिधि होई । परम रूपमय कच्छपु सोई ॥
सोभा रजु मंदरु सिंगारू । मथै पानि पंकज निज मारू ॥ ४ ॥

Sītā's beauty defies all description, Mother of the universe that She is and an embodiment of charm and excellence. All comparisons seem to me too poor; for they have affinity with the limbs of mortal women. Proceeding to depict Sītā with the help of those very similes, why should one earn the title of an unworthy poet and court ill-repute? Should Sītā be likened to any woman of this material creation, where in this world shall one come across such a lovely damsel? The goddess of speech (Saraswatī), for instance, is a chatterer; while Bhavānī possesses only half a body (the other half being represented by her lord, Śiva). And Rati (Love's consort) is extremely distressed by the thought of her husband being without a form. And it is quite out of the question to compare Videha's Daughter with Ramā, who has poison and spirituous liquor for her dear brothers. Supposing there was an ocean of nectar in the form of loveliness and the tortoise serving as a base for churning it was an embodiment of consummate beauty, and if splendour itself were to take the form of a cord, the erotic sentiment should crystallize and assume the shape of Mount Mandara and the god of love himself were to churn this ocean with his own hands,— (1—4)

दो०—एहि विधि उपजै लच्छि जब सुंदरता सुख मूल ।
तदपि सकोच समेत कबि कहहिं सीय समतूल ॥ २४७ ॥

And if from such churning were to be born a Lakṣmī, who was the source of all loveliness and joy, the poet would even then hesitatingly declare her as analogous to Sītā. (247)

चौ०—चलीं संग लै सखीं सयानी । गावत गीत मनोहर बानी ॥
सोह नवल तनु सुंदर सारी । जगत जननि अतुलित छबि भारी ॥ १ ॥
भूषन सकल सुदेस सुहाए । अंग अंग रचि सखिन्ह बनाए ॥
रंगभूमि जब सिय पगु धारी । देखि रूप मोहे नर नारी ॥ २ ॥
हरषि सुरन्ह दुंदुभीं बजाईं । बरषि प्रसून अपछरा गाईं ॥
पानि सरोज सोह जयमाला । अवचट चितए सकल भुआला ॥ ३ ॥
सीय चकित चित रामहि चाहा । भए मोहबस सब नरनाहा ॥
मुनि समीप देखे दोउ भाई । लगे ललकि लोचन निधि पाई ॥ ४ ॥

Sītā's clever companions escorted Her to the arena, singing songs in a charming voice. A beautiful Sārī (covering for the body) adorned Her youthful frame; the Mother of the universe was incomparable in Her exquisite beauty. Ornaments of all kinds had been beautifully set in their appropriate places, each limb having been decked by Her companions with great care. When Sītā stepped into the arena, men and women alike were fascinated by Her charms. The gods gladly sounded their kettledrums, while

celestial damsels rained down flowers in the midst of songs. In Her lotus-like hands sparkled the wreath of victory, as She cast a hurried glance at all the princes. While Sītā looked for Śrī Rāma with anxious heart, all the princes found themselves in the grip of infatuation. Presently Sītā discovered the two brothers by the side of the sage, and Her eyes greedily fell on them as on a long-lost treasure. (1—4)

दो०—गुरजन लाज समाजु बड़ देखि सीय सकुचानि ।
लागि बिलोकन सखिन्ह तन रघुबीरहि उर आनि ॥ २४८ ॥

Out of natural bashfulness that She felt in the presence of elders and at the sight of the vast assemblage, Sītā shrank into Herself; and drawing the Hero of Raghu's race into Her heart She turned Her eyes towards Her companions. (248)

चौ०—राम रूपु अरु सिय छबि देखें । नर नारिन्ह परिहरीं निमेषें ॥
सोचहिं सकल कहत सकुचाहीं । बिधि सन बिनय करहिं मन माहीं ॥ १ ॥
हरु बिधि बेगि जनक जड़ताई । मति हमारि असि देहि सुहाई ॥
बिनु बिचार पनु तजि नरनाहू । सीय राम कर करै बिबाहू ॥ २ ॥
जगु भल कहिहि भाव सब काहू । हठ कीन्हें अंतहुँ उर दाहू ॥
एहिं लालसाँ मगन सब लोगू । बरु साँवरो जानकी जोगू ॥ ३ ॥
तब बंदीजन जनक बोलाए । बिरिदावली कहत चलि आए ॥
कह नृपु जाइ कहहु पन मोरा । चले भाट हियँ हरषु न थोरा ॥ ४ ॥

Beholding Śrī Rāma's beauty and Sītā's loveliness men and women alike forgot to close their eyelids. All of them felt anxious in their heart but hesitated to speak; they inwardly prayed to the Creator, "Quickly take away, O Creator, Janaka's stupidity and give him right understanding like ours, so that the king without the least scruple may abandon his vow and give Sītā in marriage to Rāma. The world will speak well of him and the idea will find favour with all. On the other hand, if he persists in his folly, he shall have to rue it in the end. Everyone is absorbed in the ardent feeling that the dark-complexioned youth is a suitable match for Janaka's daughter." Then Janaka summoned the heralds, and they came eulogizing his race. The king said, "Go round and proclaim my vow." Forthwith they proceeded on their mission; there was not a little joy in their heart. (1—4)

दो०—बोले बंदी बचन बर सुनहु सकल महिपाल ।
पन बिदेह कर कहहिं हम भुजा उठाइ बिसाल ॥ २४९ ॥

The heralds then uttered these polite words, "Listen all princes: with our long arms uplifted we announce to you King Videha's vow:— (249)

चौ०—नृप भुजबलु बिधु सिवधनु राहू । गरुअ कठोर बिदित सब काहू ॥
रावनु बानु महाभट भारे । देखि सरासन गवँहिं सिधारे ॥ १
सोइ पुरारि कोदंडु कठोरा । राज समाज आजु जोइ तोरा ॥
त्रिभुवन जय समेत बैदेही । बिनहिं बिचार बरइ हठि तेही ॥ २ ॥

सुनि पन सकल भूप अभिलाषे । भटमानी अतिसय मन माखे ॥
परिकर बाँधि उठे अकुलाई । चले इष्टदेवन्ह सिर नाई ॥ ३ ॥
तमकि ताकि तकि सिवधनु धरहीं । उठइ न कोटि भाँति बलु करहीं ॥
जिन्ह के कछु बिचारु मन माहीं । चाप समीप महीप न जाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"The might of arm of the various princes stands as the moon, while Śiva's bow is the planet Rāhu as it were; it is massive and unyielding, as is well-known to all. Even the great champions Rāvana and Bānāsura quietly slipped away as soon as they saw the bow. Whoever in this royal assembly breaks today the yonder unbending bow of Śiva shall be unhesitatingly and insistently wedded by Videha's daughter and shall triumph over all the three worlds." Hearing the vow all the princes were filled with longing, while those who prided on their valour felt very indignant. Girding up their loins they rose impatiently and bowing their heads to their chosen deity went ahead. They cast an angry look at Śiva's bow, grappled with it with steady aim and exerted all their strength; but the bow refused to be lifted. Those princes, however, who had any sense at all did not even approach the bow. (1–4)

दो०—तमकि धरहिं धनु मूढ़ नृप उठइ न चलहिं लजाइ ।
मनहुँ पाइ भट बाहुबलु अधिकु अधिकु गरुआइ ॥ २५० ॥

Those foolish kings indignantly strained at the bow and retired in confusion when it refused to leave its position, as though it grew more and more bulky by absorbing the might of arm of each successive warrior. (250)

चौ०—भूप सहस दस एकहि बारा । लगे उठावन टरइ न टारा ॥
डगइ न संभु सरासनु कैसें । कामी बचन सती मनु जैसें ॥ १ ॥
सब नृप भए जोगु उपहासी । जैसें बिनु बिराग संन्यासी ॥
कीरति बिजय बीरता भारी । चले चाप कर बरबस हारी ॥ २ ॥
श्रीहत भए हारि हियँ राजा । बैठे निज निज जाइ समाजा ॥
नृपन्ह बिलोकि जनकु अकुलाने । बोले बचन रोष जनु साने ॥ ३ ॥
दीप दीप के भूपति नाना । आए सुनि हम जो पनु ठाना ॥
देव दनुज धरि मनुज सरीरा । बिपुल बीर आए रनधीरा ॥ ४ ॥

Ten thousand kings then proceeded all at once to raise it; but it baffled all attempts at moving it. Śambhu's bow did not stir in the same way as the mind of a virtuous lady refuses to yield to the words of a gallant. All the princes made themselves butts of ridicule like a recluse without dispassion. Helplessly forfeiting their fame, glory and great valour to the bow they returned. Confused and disheartened, the kings went and sat in the midst of their own company. Seeing the kings thus frustrated, King Janaka got impatient and spoke words as if in anger: "Hearing the vow made by me many a king has come from diverse parts of the globe; gods and demons in human form and many other heroes, staunch in fight, have assembled. (1–4)

दो०—कुअँरि मनोहर बिजय बड़ि कीरति अति कमनीय ।
पावनिहार बिरंचि जनु रचेउ न धनु दमनीय ॥ २५१ ॥

"A lovely bride, a grand triumph and splendid renown are the prize; but Brahmā, it seems, has not yet created the man who may break the bow and win the above rewards.

(251)

चौ०—कहहु काहि यहु लाभु न भावा। काहुँ न संकर चाप चढ़ावा॥
रहउ चढ़ाउब तोरब भाई। तिलु भरि भूमि न सके छड़ाई॥ १॥
अब जनि कोउ माखै भट मानी। बीर बिहीन मही मैं जानी॥
तजहु आस निज निज गृह जाहू। लिखा न बिधि बैदेहि बिबाहू॥ २॥
सुकृतु जाइ जौं पनु परिहरऊँ। कुअँरि कुआरि रहउ का करऊँ॥
जौं जनतेउँ बिनु भट भुबि भाई। तौ पनु करि होतेउँ न हँसाई॥ ३॥
जनक बचन सुनि सब नर नारी। देखि जानकिहि भए दुखारी॥
माखे लखनु कुटिल भइँ भौंहें। रदपट फरकत नयन रिसौंहें॥ ४॥

"Tell me, who would not have this prize? But none could string the bow. Let alone stringing or breaking it, there was not one of you, brothers, who could stir it even a grain's breadth from its place. Now no one who prides on his valour should feel offended, if I assert that there is no hero left on earth to my mind. Give up all hope and turn your faces homewards. It is not the will of Providence that Sīta should be married. All my religious merits shall be gone if I abandon my vow The princess must remain a maid; what can I do? Had I known, brothers, that there are no more heroes in the world, I would not have made myself a laughing-stock by undertaking such a vow." All who heard Janaka's words, men and women alike, felt distressed at the sight of Jānakī. Lakṣmaṇa, however, got incensed: his eyebrows were knit, his lips quivered and his eyes shot fire.

(1—4)

दो०—कहि न सकत रघुबीर डर लगे बचन जनु बान।
नाइ राम पद कमल सिरु बोले गिरा प्रमान॥ २५२॥

For fear of Śrī Rāma he could not speak, though Janaka's words pierced his heart like an arrow; yet at last, bowing his head at Śrī Rāma's lotus-feet he spoke words which were impregnated with truth:—

(252)

चौ०—रघुबंसिन्ह महुँ जहँ कोउ होई। तेहिं समाज अस कहइ न कोई॥
कही जनक जसि अनुचित बानी। बिद्यमान रघुकुल मनि जानी॥ १॥
सुनहु भानुकुल पंकज भानू। कहउँ सुभाउ न कछु अभिमानू॥
जौं तुम्हारि अनुसासन पावौं। कंदुक इव ब्रह्मांड उठावौं॥ २॥
काचे घट जिमि डारौं फोरी। सकउँ मेरु मूलक जिमि तोरी॥
तव प्रताप महिमा भगवाना। को बापुरो पिनाक पुराना॥ ३॥
नाथ जानि अस आयसु होऊ। कौतुकु करौं बिलोकिअ सोऊ॥
कमल नाल जिमि चाप चढ़ावौं। जोजन सत प्रमान लै धावौं॥ ४॥

"In an assembly where any one of Raghu's race is present no one would dare speak such scandalous words as Janaka has done, even though conscious of the presence of Śrī Rāma, the Jewel of Raghu's race. (Turning towards his

brother, he added) "Listen, O Delighter of the solar race, I sincerely tell You, without any vain boasting: if I but have Your permission, I will lift the round world like a ball and smash it like an ill-baked earthen jar; and by the glory of Your majesty, O blessed Lord, I can break Mount Meru like a radish. What, then, is this wretched old bow? Realizing this, my Lord, let me have Your command and see what wonders I work! I will string the bow as though it were a lotus-stalk and run with it not less than eight hundred miles.

(1—4)

दो०—तोरौं छत्रक दंड जिमि तव प्रताप बल नाथ।
जौं न करौं प्रभु पद सपथ कर न धरौं धनु भाथ॥ २५३॥

"By the might of Your glory, O Lord, I will snap it like the stalk of a mushroom. Or, if I fail, I swear by Your feet never to handle a bow or quiver again." (253)

चौ०—लखन सकोप बचन जे बोले। डगमगानि महि दिग्गज डोले॥
सकल लोग सब भूप डेराने। सिय हियँ हरषु जनकु सकुचाने॥ १॥
गुर रघुपति सब मुनि मन माहीं। मुदित भए पुनि पुनि पुलकाहीं॥
सयनहिं रघुपति लखनु नेवारे। प्रेम समेत निकट बैठारे॥ २॥
बिस्वामित्र समय सुभ जानी। बोले अति सनेहमय बानी॥
उठहु राम भंजहु भवचापा। मेटहु तात जनक परितापा॥ ३॥
सुनि गुरु बचन चरन सिरु नावा। हरषु बिषादु न कछु उर आवा॥
ठाढ़े भए उठि सहज सुभाएँ। ठवनि जुबा मृगराजु लजाएँ॥ ४॥

As Lakṣmaṇa spoke these angry words, the earth shook and the elephants supporting the quarters tottered. The whole assembly, including all the princes, was struck with terror: Sītā felt delighted at heart, while Janaka blushed. The preceptor (Viśwāmitra), the Lord of Raghus and all the hermits were glad of heart and thrilled all over again and again. With a sign Śrī Rāma checked Lakṣmaṇa and made him sit beside Him. Perceiving that it was a propitious time, Viśwāmitra said in most endearing terms, "Up, Rāma, break the bow of Śiva and relieve Janaka, my boy, of his anguish." On hearing the Guru's words Śrī Rāma bowed His head at his feet; there was no joy or sorrow in His heart. He stood up in all His native grace, putting to shame a young lion by His elegant carriage.

(1—4)

दो०—उदित उदयगिरि मंच पर रघुबर बालपतंग।
बिकसे संत सरोज सब हरषे लोचन भृंग॥ २५४॥

As the Chief of the Raghus rose on His elevated seat like the morning sun appearing in the eastern horizon, all the saints were delighted like so many lotuses and their eyes were glad as bees at the return of day. (254)

चौ०—नृपन्ह केरि आसा निसि नासी। बचन नखत अवली न प्रकासी॥
मानी महिप कुमुद सकुचाने। कपटी भूप उलूक लुकाने॥ १॥

भए बिसोक कोक मुनि देवा। बरिसहिं सुमन जनावहिं सेवा॥
गुर पद बंदि सहित अनुरागा। राम मुनिन्ह सन आयसु मागा॥ २॥
सहजहिं चले सकल जग स्वामी। मत्त मंजु बर कुंजर गामी॥
चलत राम सब पुर नर नारी। पुलक पूरि तन भए सुखारी॥ ३॥
बंदि पितर सुर सुकृत सँभारे। जौं कछु पुन्य प्रभाउ हमारे॥
तौ सिवधनु मृनाल की नाईं। तोरहुँ रामु गनेस गोसाईं॥ ४॥

The hopes of the rival kings vanished as night and their boasts died away like the serried stars. The arrogant princes shrivelled up like the lilies and the false kings shrank away like owls. Sages and gods, like the Chakravāka bird, were rid of their sorrow and rained down flowers in token of their homage. Affectionately reverencing the Guru's feet Śrī Rāma asked leave of the holy fathers. The Lord of all creation then stepped forth in His natural grace with the tread of a noble and beautiful elephant in rut. As Śrī Rāma moved ahead all men and women of the city rejoiced and thrilled all over their body. Invoking the manes and gods and recalling their own past good deeds they prayed: "If our religious merits are of any value, O Lord Gaṇeśa, may Rāma snap the bow of Śiva as it were a lotus-stalk." (1—4)

दो०—रामहि प्रेम समेत लखि सखिन्ह समीप बोलाइ।
सीता मातु सनेह बस बचन कहइ बिलखाइ॥ २५५॥

Lovingly gazing on Śrī Rāma and bidding her companions draw near, Sītā's mother spoke words full of anguish out of affection:— (255)

चौ०—सखि सब कौतुकु देखनिहारे। जेउ कहावत हितू हमारे॥
कोउ न बुझाइ कहइ गुर पाहीं। ए बालक असि हठ भलि नाहीं॥ १॥
रावन बान छुआ नहिं चापा। हारे सकल भूप करि दापा॥
सो धनु राजकुअँर कर देहीं। बाल मराल कि मंदर लेहीं॥ २॥
भूप सयानप सकल सिरानी। सखि बिधि गति कछु जाति न जानी॥
बोली चतुर सखी मृदु बानी। तेजवंत लघु गनिअ न रानी॥ ३॥
कहँ कुंभज कहँ सिंधु अपारा। सोषेउ सुजसु सकल संसारा॥
रबि मंडल देखत लघु लागा। उदयँ तासु तिभुवन तम भागा॥ ४॥

"Whosoever are called our friends, dear ones, are mere spectators of a show; no one urges the preceptor (Viśwāmitra) and tells him that the two princes are yet boys and that such insistence on his part is not desirable. Knowing that Rāvaṇa and Bāṇāsura did not even touch the bow and that all other kings were worsted in spite of all their boasts, strange that he should give the same bow into the hands of this young prince; can cygnets ever lift Mount Mandara ? Good sense has taken leave of the king; and one does not know the dispensation of Providence, dear ones." One of her sharp-witted companions gently replied, "The glorious are not to be lightly regarded, O queen. What comparison is there between the sage

Agastya, who was born of a jar, and the vast ocean ? Yet the sage drained it dry, and his good fame has spread throughout the world. The orb of the sun is so small to look at; but the moment it rises the darkness of all the three worlds disappears. (1–4)

दो०—मंत्र परम लघु जासु बस बिधि हरि हर सुर सर्ब ।
महामत्त गजराज कहुँ बस कर अंकुस खर्ब ॥ २५६ ॥

"A sacred formula, indeed, is very small, although it has under its sway **Brahma**, Hari, Hara and all other gods. A tiny goad governs the mightiest and **most** furious elephant. (256)

चौ०—काम कुसुम धनु सायक लीन्हे । सकल भुवन अपनें बस कीन्हे ॥
देबि तजिअ संसउ अस जानी । भंजब धनुषु राम सुनु रानी ॥ १ ॥
सखी बचन सुनि भै परतीती । मिटा बिषादु बढ़ी अति प्रीती ॥
तब रामहि बिलोकि बैदेही । सभय हृदयँ बिनवति जेहि तेही ॥ २ ॥
मनहीं मन मनाव अकुलानी । होहु प्रसन्न महेस भवानी ॥
करहु सफल आपनि सेवकाई । करि हितु हरहु चाप गरुआई ॥ ३ ॥
गननायक बरदायक देवा । आजु लगें कीन्हिउँ तुअ सेवा ॥
बार बार बिनती सुनि मोरी । करहु चाप गुरुता अति थोरी ॥ ४ ॥

"Armed with a bow and arrows of flowers Cupid has brought the whole universe under subjection. Realizing this, O good lady, give up all doubt; Rāma, O Queen, will assuredly break the bow, I tell you." The queen felt reassured at these words of her companion; her despondency was gone and her love for Śrī Rāma grew. Then, casting a glance towards Śrī Rāma, Videha's daughter implored with anxious heart each god in turn. She inwardly prayed in a distressed state of mind: "Be gracious to me, O great Lord Śiva and Bhavānī, and reward my services by lightening the weight of the bow out of affection for me. O god Gaṇeśa, the chief of Śiva's attendants, O bestower of boons, it is for this day that I have adored You. Listening to my repeated supplication, therefore, reduce the weight of the bow to a mere trifle." (1–4)

दो०—देखि देखि रघुबीर तन सुर मनाव धरि धीर ।
भरे बिलोचन प्रेम जल पुलकावली सरीर ॥ २५७ ॥

Gazing repeatedly on the person of Śrī Rāma and summoning courage Sītā prayed to gods. Her eyes were filled with tears of love and the hair on Her body stood on their end. (257)

चौ०—नीकें निरखि नयन भरि सोभा । पितु पनु सुमिरि बहुरि मनु छोभा ॥
अहह तात दारुनि हठ ठानी । समुझत नहिं कछु लाभु न हानी ॥ १ ॥
सचिव सभय सिख देइ न कोई । बुध समाज बड़ अनुचित होई ॥
कहँ धनु कुलिसहु चाहि कठोरा । कहँ स्यामल मृदुगात किसोरा ॥ २ ॥
बिधि केहि भाँति धरौं उर धीरा । सिरस सुमन कन बेधिअ हीरा ॥
सकल सभा कै मति भै भोरी । अब मोहि संभुचाप गति तोरी ॥ ३ ॥

निज जड़ता लोगन्ह पर डारी । होहि हरुअ रघुपतिहि निहारी ॥
अति परिताप सीय मन माहीं । लव निमेष जुग सय सम जाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

She feasted Her eyes to their fill on Śrī Rāma's beauty; but then the thought of Her father's vow agitated Her mind. She said to Herself, "Alas, my father has made a terrible resolve having no regard to good or evil consequences. The ministers are afraid; therefore none of them gives him good counsel. It is all the more pity that it should be so in a conclave of wise men. While on this side stands the bow harder than adamant, on the other side we find that dark-complexioned prince of delicate frame and tender age. How then, O god, can I maintain my balance of mind? Is a diamond ever pierced with the pointed end of a Śirīṣa flower? The sense of the whole assembly has become dull; hence my only hope now lies in you, O Śambhu's bow. Imparting your heaviness to the assembly grow light yourself at the sight of (in proportion to the size of) Śrī Rāma." Sītā felt much agitated at heart; an instant hung heavy on Her as a hundred Yugas. (1—4)

दो०—प्रभुहि चितइ पुनि चितव महि राजत लोचन लोल ।
खेलत मनसिज मीन जुग जनु बिधु मंडल डोल ॥ २५८ ॥

Gazing now at the Lord and now at the ground, Her restless eyes sparkled as if two Cupid's fish disported themselves in the pail-like orb of the moon. (258)

चौ०—गिरा अलिनि मुख पंकज रोकी । प्रगट न लाज निसा अवलोकी ॥
लोचन जलु रह लोचन कोना । जैसें परम कृपन कर सोना ॥ १ ॥
सकुची ब्याकुलता बड़ि जानी । धरि धीरजु प्रतीति उर आनी ॥
तन मन बचन मोर पनु साचा । रघुपति पद सरोज चितु राचा ॥ २ ॥
तौ भगवानु सकल उर बासी । करिहि मोहि रघुबर कै दासी ॥
जेहि कें जेहि पर सत्य सनेहू । सो तेहि मिलइ न कछु संदेहू ॥ ३ ॥
प्रभु तन चितइ प्रेम तन ठाना । कृपानिधान राम सबु जाना ॥
सियहि बिलोकि तकेउ धनु कैसें । चितव गरुरु लघु ब्यालहि जैसें ॥ ४ ॥

Held captive within Her lotus-like mouth Her bee-like speech refused to stir out for fear of the night of modesty. Tears remained confined within the corner of Her eyes*, just as the gold of a stingy miser remains buried in a nook of his house. Sītā felt abashed when She perceived Her great agitation of mind; summoning up courage in Her heart, therefore, She confidently said to Herself, "If I am true to my vow in thought, word and deed, and if my mind is really attached to the lotus-feet of Śrī Rāma, I am sure God, who dwells in the heart of all, will make me Śrī Rāma's bondslave; for one gets united without doubt with him for whom one cherishes true love." Casting a glance at the Lord She resolved to love Him even at the cost of Her life. Śrī Rama, the embodiment of compassion, understood it all; looking at Sītā He glanced at the bow as Garuḍa (the king of birds and a sworn enemy of serpents) would gaze on a poor little snake. (1—4)

---

* Shedding of tears is regarded in India as an ill-omen; therefore, on auspicious occasions Indian women would take particular care not to allow tears to drop from their eyes.

दो०—लखन लखेउ रघुबंसमनि ताकेउ हर कोदंडु ।
पुलकि गात बोले बचन चरन चापि ब्रह्मांडु ॥ २५९ ॥

When Lakṣmaṇa perceived that the Jewel of Raghu's race had cast a glance at the bow of Hara, the hair on his body stood erect and he uttered the following words pressing the crust of the earth under his foot:— (259)

चौ०—दिसिकुंजरहु कमठ अहि कोला । धरहु धरनि धरि धीर न डोला ॥
रामु चहहिं संकर धनु तोरा । होहु सजग सुनि आयसु मोरा ॥ १ ॥
चाप समीप रामु जब आए । नर नारिन्ह सुर सुकृत मनाए ॥
सब कर संसउ अरु अग्यानू । मंद महीपन्ह कर अभिमानू ॥ २ ॥
भृगुपति केरि गरब गरुआई । सुर मुनिबरन्ह केरि कदराई ॥
सिय कर सोचु जनक पछितावा । रानिन्ह कर दारुन दुख दावा ॥ ३ ॥
संभुचाप बड़ बोहितु पाई । चढ़े जाइ सब संगु बनाई ॥
राम बाहुबल सिंधु अपारू । चहत पारु नहिं कोउ कड़हारू ॥ ४ ॥

"O elephants guarding the cardinal points, O divine tortoise*, O serpent-king, and O divine boar*, steadily hold the earth that it may not shake. Śrī Rāma seeks to break the bow of Śankara; therefore, listen to my command and be ready." When Rāma drew near to the bow, men and women present there invoked in His behalf the help of gods as well as of their past good deeds. The doubts and ignorance of all who had assembled there, the arrogance of the foolish kings, the proud pretensions of Paraśurāma (the Chief of Bhṛgu's race), the apprehension of gods and the great sages, the distress of Sītā, King Janaka's remorse and the fire of the queen's terrible agony—all these boarded together the great bark of Śambhu's bow, with whose help they sought to cross the boundless ocean of Śrī Rāma's strength of arm; but there was no helmsman to steer the ship. (1—4)

दो०—राम बिलोके लोग सब चित्र लिखे से देखि ।
चितई सीय कृपायतन जानी बिकल बिसेषि ॥ २६० ॥

Rāma first looked at the crowd of spectators and found them motionless as the figures of a drawing. The gracious Lord then turned His eyes towards Sītā and perceived Her in deep distress (260)

चौ०—देखी बिपुल बिकल बैदेही । निमिष बिहात कलप सम तेही ॥
तृषित बारि बिनु जो तनु त्यागा । मुएँ करइ का सुधा तड़ागा ॥ १ ॥
का बरषा सब कृषी सुखानें । समय चुकें पुनि का पछितानें ॥
अस जियँ जानि जानकी देखी । प्रभु पुलके लखि प्रीति बिसेषी ॥ २ ॥

* The divine tortoise referred to here is the same who served as the base for churning the ocean of milk at the dawn of creation. And the divine boar refers to the manifestation of the Lord as a boar in order to lift the earth out of the waters in which the demon Hiraṇyākṣa had submerged it. The tortoise as well as the boar are represented here as ever holding the earth, conjointly with the serpent-king, the one on its back and the other on its tusks.

गुरहि प्रनामु मनहिं मन कीन्हा । अति लाघवँ उठाइ धनु लीन्हा ॥
दमकेउ दामिनि जिमि जब लयऊ । पुनि नभ धनु मंडलसम भयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
लेत चढ़ावत खैंचत गाढ़ें । काहुँ न लखा देख सबु ठाढ़ें ॥
तेहि छन राम मध्य धनु तोरा । भरे भुवन धुनि घोर कठोरा ॥ ४ ॥

He found Videha's Daughter greatly agitated; every moment that passed hung on Her as a whole life-time of the universe. If a thirsty man dies for want of water, of what avail is a lake of nectar to him once he is dead. What good is a shower when the whole crop is dried up; what use repenting over an opportunity lost ? Thinking thus within Himself the Lord looked at Janaka's Daughter and thrilled all over to perceive Her singular devotion. He inwardly made obeisance to His preceptor (Viśwāmitra), and took up the bow with great agility. The bow gleamed like a flash of lightning as He grasped it in His hand. And then it appeared like a circle in the sky. No one knew when He took it in His hands, strung it and drew it tight; everyone only saw Him standing (with the bow drawn). Instantly Śrī Rāma broke the bow in halves; the awful crash resounded through all the spheres. (1—4)

छं०—भरे भुवन घोर कठोर रव रबि बाजि तजि मारगु चले ।
चिक्करहिं दिग्गज डोल महि अहि कोल कूरुम कलमले ॥
सुर असुर मुनि कर कान दीन्हें सकल बिकल बिचारहीं ।
कोदंड खंडेउ राम तुलसी जयति बचन उचारहीं ॥

The awful crash reached through the spheres; the horses of the sun-god strayed from their course; the elephants of the quarters trumpeted, the earth shook; the serpent-king, the divine boar and the divine tortoise fidgeted about. Gods, demons and sages put their hands to their ears, and all began anxiously to ponder the cause; but when they learnt, says Tulasīdāsa, that Śrī Rāma had broken the bow, they uttered shouts of victory.

सो०—संकर चापु जहाजु सागरु रघुबर बाहुबलु ।
बूड़ सो सकल समाजु चढ़ा जो प्रथमहिं मोह बस ॥ २६१ ॥

The bow of Śankara was the bark and Rāma's strength of arm was the ocean to be crossed with its aid. The whole host (of which we have spoken above), that had boarded the ship out of ignorance, was drowned (with the bark). (261)

चौ०—प्रभु दोउ चापखंड महि डारे । देखि लोग सब भए सुखारे ॥
कौसिकरूप पयोनिधि पावन । प्रेम बारि अवगाहु सुहावन ॥ १ ॥
रामरूप राकेसु निहारी । बढ़त बीचि पुलकावलि भारी ॥
बाजे नभ गहगहे निसाना । देवबधू नाचहिं करि गाना ॥ २ ॥
ब्रह्मादिक सुर सिद्ध मुनीसा । प्रभुहि प्रसंसहिं देहिं असीसा ॥
बरिसहिं सुमन रंग बहु माला । गावहिं किंनर गीत रसाला ॥ ३ ॥

रही भुवन भरि जय जय बानी। धनुषभंग धुनि जात न जानी ॥
मुदित कहहिं जहँ तहँ नर नारी। भंजेउ राम संभुधनु भारी ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord tossed on ground the two broken pieces of the bow, and everyone rejoiced at the sight. Viśwāmitra stood as the holy ocean, full of the sweet and unfathomable water of love. Beholding Śrī Rāma's beauty, which represented the full moon, the sage felt an increasing thrill of joy, which may be compared to a rising tide in the ocean. Kettledrums sounded with great noise in the heavens; celestial damsels sang and danced. Brahmā and the other gods, Siddhas and great sages praised the Lord and gave Him blessings raining down wreaths and flowers of various colours; the Kinnaras (a class of demigods) sang melodious strains. The shouts of victory re-echoed throughout the universe; the crash that followed the breaking of the bow was drowned in it. Everywhere men and women in their joy kept saying that Rāma had broken the massive bow of Śambhu. (1—4)

दो०—बंदी मागध सूतगन बिरुद बदहिं मतिधीर।
करहिं निछावरि लोग सब हय गय धन मनि चीर ॥ २६२ ॥

Talented bards, minstrels and panegyrists sang praises; and everybody gave away horses, elephants, riches, jewels and raiments as an act of invocation of God's blessings on the youthful champion. (262)

चौ०—झाँझि मृदंग संख सहनाई। भेरि ढोल दुंदुभी सुहाई ॥
बाजहिं बहु बाजने सुहाए। जहँ तहँ जुबतिन्ह मंगल गाए ॥ १ ॥
सखिन्ह सहित हरषी अति रानी। सूखत धान परा जनु पानी ॥
जनक लहेउ सुखु सोचु बिहाई। पैरत थकें थाह जनु पाई ॥ २ ॥
श्रीहत भए भूप धनु टूटे। जैसें दिवस दीप छबि छूटे ॥
सीय सुखहि बरनिअ केहि भाँती। जनु चातकी पाइ जलु स्वाती ॥ ३ ॥
रामहि लखनु बिलोकत कैसें। ससिहि चकोर किसोरकु जैसें ॥
सतानंद तब आयसु दीन्हा। सीताँ गमनु राम पहिं कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

There was a crash of cymbals and tabors, conches and clarionets, drums and sweet-sounding kettledrums, both large and small; and many other charming instruments also played. Everywhere young women sang auspicious strains. The queen with her companions was much delighted, as though a withering crop of paddy had been refreshed by a shower. King Janaka was now care-free and felt gratified as if a tired swimmer had reached a shallow. The kings' countenance fell at the breaking of the bow, just as a lamp is dimmed at dawn of day. Sītā's delight could only be compared to that of a female Chātaka* bird on receiving a rain-drop when the sun is in the same longitude as the constellation named Swātī* (Arcturus). Lakṣmaṇa fixed his eyes on Rāma as the young of a Chakora bird gazes on the moon. Śatānanda then gave the word and Sītā advanced towards Rāma. (1—4)

*According to the Indian tradition a Chātaka bird would slake its thirst only with a rain-drop obtained when the sun is in the same longitude as the Arcturus (which is generally in the month of October, a month when showers are of rare occurrence).

दो०—संग सखीं सुंदर चतुर गावहिं मंगलचार ।
गवनी बाल मराल गति सुषमा अंग अपार ॥ २६३ ॥

Accompanied by Her fair and talented companions, who were singing festal songs, She paced like a cygnet, Her limbs possessing infinite charm. (263)

चौ०—सखिन्ह मध्य सिय सोहति कैसें । छबिगन मध्य महाछबि जैसें ॥
कर सरोज जयमाल सुहाई । बिस्व बिजय सोभा जेहिं छाई ॥ १ ॥
तन सकोचु मन परम उछाहू । गूढ़ प्रेमु लखि परइ न काहू ॥
जाइ समीप राम छबि देखी । रहि जनु कुअँरि चित्र अवरेखी ॥ २ ॥
चतुर सखीं लखि कहा बुझाई । पहिरावहु जयमाल सुहाई ॥
सुनत जुगल कर माल उठाई । प्रेम बिबस पहिराइ न जाई ॥ ३ ॥
सोहत जनु जुग जलज सनाला । ससिहि सभीत देत जयमाला ॥
गावहिं छबि अवलोकि सहेली । सियँ जयमाल राम उर मेली ॥ ४ ॥

In the midst of Her companions Sītā shone as a personification of supreme beauty among other embodiments of beauty. She held in one of Her lotus hands the fair wreath of victory, resplendent with the glory of triumph over the whole universe. While Her body shrank with modesty, Her heart was full of rapture; Her hidden love could not be perceived by others. As She drew near and beheld Śrī Rāma's beauty, Princess Sītā stood motionless as a portrait. A clever companion, who perceived Her in this condition, exhorted Her saying, "Invest the bridegroom with the beautiful wreath of victory." At this She raised the wreath with both of Her hands, but was too overwhelmed with emotion to garland Him. In this act Her uplifted hands shone as if a pair of lotuses with their stalks were timidly investing the moon with a wreath of victory. At this charming sight Her companions broke into a song, while Sītā placed the wreath of victory round Śrī Rāma's neck so as to adorn His breast. (1—4)

सो०—रघुबर उर जयमाल देखि देव बरिसहिं सुमन ।
सकुचे सकल भुआल जनु बिलोकि रबि कुमुदगन ॥ २६४ ॥

Witnessing the wreath of victory resting on Śrī Rāma's bosom, gods rained down flowers; while the kings all shrank in confusion like lilies at the rising of the sun. (264)

चौ०—पुर अरु ब्योम बाजने बाजे । खल भए मलिन साधु सब राजे ॥
सुर किंनर नर नाग मुनीसा । जय जय जय कहि देहिं असीसा ॥ १ ॥
नाचहिं गावहिं बिबुध बधूटीं । बार बार कुसुमांजलि छूटीं ॥
जहँ तहँ बिप्र बेदधुनि करहीं । बंदी बिरिदावलि उच्चरहीं ॥ २ ॥
महि पाताल नाक जसु ब्यापा । राम बरी सिय भंजेउ चापा ॥
करहिं आरती पुर नर नारी । देहिं निछावरि बित्त बिसारी ॥ ३ ॥
सोहति सीय राम कै जोरी । छबि सिंगारु मनहुँ एक ठोरी ॥
सखीं कहहिं प्रभुपद गहु सीता । करति न चरन परस अति भीता ॥ ४ ॥

There was music both in the city and in the heavens; while the wicked were downcast, the virtuous beamed with joy. Gods, Kinnaras, men, Nāgas and great sages uttered blessings with shouts of victory. Celestial dames danced and sang and handfuls of flowers were showered again and again. Here and there the Brahmans recited the Vedas, while panegyrists sang praises. The glad tidings spread throughout the earth, the subterranean regions and heaven that Śrī Rāma had broken the bow and won the hand of Sītā. The people of the city waved lights round the pair in order to ward off evil; and regardless of their means they scattered gifts in profusion as an act of invocation of Divine blessings on the couple. The pair of Śrī Rāma and Sītā shone as if beauty and the sentiment of Love had met together in human form. Her companions urged Her. "Sītā, clasp your lord's feet." But Sītā was too much afraid to touch His feet. (1—4)

दो०—गौतम तिय गति सुरति करि नहिं परसति पग पानि ।
मन बिहसे रघुबंसमनि प्रीति अलौकिक जानि ॥ २६५ ॥

Remembering the fate of the sage Gautama's wife, Ahalyā, She would not touch His feet with Her hands; the Jewel of Raghu's race inwardly smiled to perceive Her transcendent love. (265)

चौ०—तब सिय देखि भूप अभिलाषे । कूर कपूत मूढ़ मन माखे ॥
उठि उठि पहिरि सनाह अभागे । जहँ तहँ गाल बजावन लागे ॥ १ ॥
लेहु छड़ाइ सीय कह कोऊ । धरि बाँधहु नृप बालक दोऊ ॥
तोरें धनुषु चाड़ नहिं सरई । जीवत हमहि कुअँरि को बरई ॥ २ ॥
जौं बिदेहु कछु करै सहाई । जीतहु समर सहित दोउ भाई ॥
साधु भूप बोले सुनि बानी । राजसमाजहि लाज लजानी ॥ ३ ॥
बलु प्रतापु बीरता बड़ाई । नाक पिनाकहि संग सिधाई ॥
सोइ सूरता कि अब कहुँ पाई । असि बुधि तौ बिधि मुहँ मसि लाई ॥ ४ ॥

Then, as they looked on Sītā, a few princes were filled with longing for Her; those wicked, degenerate fools grew indignant. Rising from their seats one after another and donning their armour the wretches began to brag about. Someone said, "Carry off Sītā by force and capturing the two princes hold them in bondage. No purpose will be served by merely breaking the bow; for who shall marry the princess while we still live? Should Janaka come forward to help them, rout him in battle along with the two brothers." When the good kings heard these words, they said, "Shame itself feels shy in approaching this assembly of princes. Your might, glory, valour, fame and honour have been shattered along with the bow. Is it the same valour of which you are boasting, or have you since acquired it anew from somewhere else? It is because such is your mentality that God has blackened your faces. (1—4)

दो०—देखहु रामहि नयन भरि तजि इरिषा मदु कोहु ।
लखन रोषु पावकु प्रबल जानि सलभ जनि होहु ॥ २६६ ॥

"Giving up jealousy, arrogance and anger, therefore, feast your eyes upon Rāma; and knowing Lakṣmaṇa's wrath to be a blazing fire, do not allow yourselves to be consumed by it like a moth. (266)

चौ०—बैनतेय बलि जिमि चह कागू । जिमि ससु चहै नाग अरि भागू ॥
जिमि चह कुसल अकारन कोही । सब संपदा चहै सिवद्रोही ॥ १ ॥
लोभी लोलुप कल कीरति चहई । अकलंकता कि कामी लहई ॥
हरि पद बिमुख परम गति चाहा । तस तुम्हार लालचु नरनाहा ॥ २ ॥
कोलाहलु सुनि सीय सकानी । सखीं लवाइ गईं जहँ रानी ॥
रामु सुभायँ चले गुरु पाहीं । सिय सनेहु बरनत मन माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
रानिन्ह सहित सोचबस सीया । अब धौं बिधिहि काह करनीया ॥
भूप बचन सुनि इत उत तकहीं । लखनु राम डर बोलि न सकहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"As a crow should seek an offering set apart for Garuḍa (the king of birds), as a rabbit should covet the share of a lion, as a man who is angry without any cause should expect happiness, as an enemy of Śiva should crave for riches of all kinds, as a greedy and covetous man should long for good fame and as a gallant should aspire to be free from scandal, and as one who is averse to Śrī Hari's feet should hanker after the highest destiny (Liberation), your longing, O princes, (for Sītā) is of the same category." When Sītā heard the tumult, She got afraid and Her companions took Her to the queen; while Śrī Rāma advanced to His Guru, easy in mind and inwardly praising Her affection. The queens as well as Sītā were filled with anxiety and wondered what Providence had in store for them. On hearing the words of the princes Lakṣmaṇa looked hither and thither; for fear of Rāma, however, he could not speak. (1—4)

दो०—अरुन नयन भृकुटी कुटिल चितवत नृपन्ह सकोप ।
मनहुँ मत्त गजगन निरखि सिंघकिसोरहि चोप ॥ २६७ ॥

With fiery eyes and knitted brows he cast an angry look at the kings, as though, at the sight of a herd of wild elephants in rut, a lion's whelp were eager to pounce on them. (267)

चौ०—खरभरु देखि बिकल पुर नारीं । सब मिलि देहिं महीपन्ह गारीं ॥
तेहिं अवसर सुनि सिवधनु भंगा । आयउ भृगुकुल कमल पतंगा ॥ १ ॥
देखि महीप सकल सकुचाने । बाज झपट जनु लवा लुकाने ॥
गौरि सरीर भूति भल भ्राजा । भाल बिसाल त्रिपुंड बिराजा ॥ २ ॥
सीस जटा ससिबदनु सुहावा । रिसबस कछुक अरुन होइ आवा ॥
भृकुटी कुटिल नयन रिस राते । सहजहुँ चितवत मनहुँ रिसाते ॥ ३ ॥
बृषभ कंध उर बाहु बिसाला । चारु जनेउ माल मृगछाला ॥
कटि मुनिबसन तून दुइ बाँधें । धनु सर कर कुठारु कल काँधें ॥ ४ ॥

Seeing the uproar the women of the city were all distressed and joined in cursing the princes. That very moment arrived the sage Parasurama, a very sun to the lotus-like race of Bhṛgu, led by the news of the breaking of the bow. At

his very sight the kings all cowered down even as a quail would shrink beneath the swoop of a hawk. A coat of ashes looked most charming on his fair body; his broad forehead was adorned with a Tripuṇḍra (a speculiar mark consisting of three horizontal lines, sacred to Śiva). Having matted locks on the head, his handsome moon-like face was a bit reddened with anger; with knitted brows and eyes inflamed with passion, his natural look gave one the impression that he was enraged. He had well-built shoulders like those of a bull and a broad chest and long arms; he was adorned with a beautiful sacred thread, rosary and deerskin. With an anchorite's covering about his loins and a pair of quivers fastened by his side, he held a bow and arrows in his hands and an axe upon his fair shoulder. (1—4)

दो०—सांत बेषु करनी कठिन बरनि न जाइ सरूप।
धरि मुनितनु जनु बीर रसु आयउ जहँ सब भूप ॥ २६८ ॥

Though saintly in attire, he had a cruel record of deeds; his character, therefore, defied description. It looked as if the heroic sentiment had taken the form of a hermit and arrived where the kings had assembled. (268)

चौ०—देखत भृगुपति बेषु कराला। उठे सकल भय बिकल भुआला ॥
पितु समेत कहि कहि निज नामा। लगे करन सब दंड प्रनामा ॥ १ ॥
जेहि सुभायँ चितवहिं हितु जानी। सो जानइ जनु आइ खुटानी ॥
जनक बहोरि आइ सिरु नावा। सीय बोलाइ प्रनामु करावा ॥ २ ॥
आसिष दीन्हि सखीं हरषानीं। निज समाज लै गईं सयानीं ॥
बिस्वामित्रु मिले पुनि आई। पद सरोज मेले दोउ भाई ॥ ३ ॥
रामु लखनु दसरथ के ढोटा। दीन्हि असीस देखि भल जोटा ॥
रामहि चितइ रहे थकि लोचन। रूप अपार मार मद मोचन ॥ ४ ॥

Beholding the frightful figure of Paraśurāma the kings all rose in consternation; and mentioning his own as well as his father's name, each fell prostrate on the ground before him. Even he on whom Paraśurāma cast a friendly look in a natural way thought the sands of his life had run out. Then came Janaka and bowed his head; and sending for Sītā he made Her pay homage to the sage. Her companions rejoiced when he bestowed his blessing on Her, and cleverly took Her where the other ladies were. Next came Viśwāmitra, who met him and placed the two brothers at his lotus feet, saying that they were King Daśaratha's sons, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa by name; seeing the well-matched pair, he blessed them. His eyes were rivetted on Śrī Rāma's incomparable beauty, which would humble the pride of Cupid himself. (1—4)

दो०—बहुरि बिलोकि बिदेह सन कहहु काह अति भीर।
पूँछत जानि अजान जिमि ब्यापेउ कोपु सरीर ॥ २६९ ॥

Then he looked round, and though knowing everything, he asked Videha, like one ignorant, "Tell me, what has attracted all this crowd here ?" And as he spoke thus wrath took possession of his whole being. (269)

चौ०—समाचार कहि जनक सुनाए । जेहि कारन महीप सब आए ॥
सुनत बचन फिरि अनत निहारे । देखे चापखंड महि डारे ॥ १ ॥
अति रिस बोले बचन कठोरा । कहु जड़ जनक धनुष कै तोरा ॥
बेगि देखाउ मूढ़ न त आजू । उलटउँ महि जहँ लहि तव राजू ॥ २ ॥
अति डरु उतरु देत नृपु नाहीं । कुटिल भूप हरषे मन माहीं ॥
सुर मुनि नाग नगर नर नारी । सोचहिं सकल त्रास उर भारी ॥ ३ ॥
मन पछिताति सीय महतारी । बिधि अब सँवरी बात बिगारी ॥
भृगुपति कर सुभाउ सुनि सीता । अरध निमेष कलप सम बीता ॥ ४ ॥

Janaka narrated to him the whole history, mentioning what had brought all the kings there. On hearing this reply Paraśurāma turned round, and looking in the other direction he espied the fragments of the bow lying on the ground. Flying into a rage he spoke in harsh tones, "Tell me, O stupid Janaka, who has broken the bow ? Show him at once, or this very day I will overthrow the whole tract of land over which your dominion extends." In his excess of fear, the king would make no answer; and the wicked kings were glad of heart. Gods, sages, Nāgas and the people of the city were all filled with anxiety; their hearts were much agitated. Sītā's mother lamented within herself, saying, "Alas ! God has undone an accomplished fact." When Sītā heard of Paraśurāma's temperament, even half a moment passed to Her like a whole life-time of the universe. (1—4)

दो०—सभय बिलोके लोग सब जानि जानकी भीरु ।
हृदयँ न हरषु बिषादु कछु बोले श्रीरघुबीरु ॥ २७० ॥

When the Hero of Raghu's race saw everyone seized with panic and perceived Jānakī's anxiety, He interposed; there was neither joy nor sorrow in His heart. (270)

[PAUSE 9 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—नाथ संभुधनु भंजनिहारा । होइहि केउ एक दास तुम्हारा ॥
आयसु काह कहिअ किन मोही । सुनि रिसाइ बोले मुनि कोही ॥ १ ॥
सेवकु सो जो करै सेवकाई । अरि करनी करि करिअ लराई ॥
सुनहु राम जेहिं सिवधनु तोरा । सहसबाहु सम सो रिपु मोरा ॥ २ ॥
सो बिलगाउ बिहाइ समाजा । न त मारे जैहहिं सब राजा ॥
सुनि मुनि बचन लखन मुसुकाने । बोले परसुधरहि अपमाने ॥ ३ ॥
बहु धनुहीं तोरीं लरिकाईं । कबहुँ न असि रिस कीन्हि गोसाईं ॥
एहि धनु पर ममता केहि हेतू । सुनि रिसाइ कह भृगुकुलकेतू ॥ ४ ॥

"My lord, it must be some one of your servants who has broken the bow of Śiva. What is your command ? Why not tell me ?" At this the furious sage was all the more incensed, and said, "A servant is he who does service; having played the role of an enemy, one should give battle. Listen, O Rāma:

whoever has broken Śiva's bow is my enemy no less than the thousand-armed Kārtavīrya. Let him stand apart, leaving this assembly; or else every one of these kings shall be slain." Hearing the sage's words Lakṣmaṇa smiled and said insulting Paraśurāma (the wielder of an axe), "I have broken many a small bow in my childhood; but you never grew so angry, my lord. Why should you be so fond of this particular bow?" At this the Chief of Bhṛgu's race burst out in a fury:— (1—4)

दो०—रे नृप बालक काल बस बोलत तोहि न सँभार ।
धनुही सम तिपुरारि धनु बिदित सकल संसार ॥ २७१ ॥

"O young prince, being in the grip of death you have no control over your speech. Would you compare to a small bow the mighty bow of Śiva, that is known throughout the world?" (271)

चौ०—लखन कहा हँसि हमरें जाना । सुनहु देव सब धनुष समाना ॥
का छति लाभु जून धनु तोरें । देखा राम नयन के ओरें ॥ १ ॥
छुअत टूट रघुपतिहु न दोसू । मुनि बिनु काज करिअ कत रोसू ॥
बोले चितइ परसु की ओरा । रे सठ सुनेहि सुभाउ न मोरा ॥ २ ॥
बालकु बोलि बधउँ नहिं तोही । केवल मुनि जड़ जानहि मोही ॥
बालब्रह्मचारी अति कोही । बिस्व बिदित छत्रियकुल द्रोही ॥ ३ ॥
भुजबल भूमि भूप बिनु कीन्ही । बिपुल बार महिदेवन्ह दीन्ही ॥
सहसबाहु भुज छेदनिहारा । परसु बिलोकु महीपकुमारा ॥ ४ ॥

Said Lakṣmaṇa with a smile, "Listen, holy Sir: to my mind all bows are alike. What gain or loss can there be in the breaking of a worn-out bow? Śrī Rāma mistook it for a new one, and at His very touch it broke in two; the Lord of Raghus, therefore, was not to blame for it either. Why, then, be angry, reverend sir, for no cause?" Casting a glance at his axe, Paraśurāma replied, "O foolish child, have you never heard of my temper? I slay you not because, as I say, you are a child yet; do you take me for a mere anchorite, O dullard? I have been a celibate from my very boyhood, but also an irascible one; and I am known throughout the world as a sworn enemy of the Kṣatriya race. By the might of my arm I made the earth kingless and bestowed it time after time upon the Brahmans. Look at this axe, which lopped off the arms of Sahasrabāhu (the thousand-armed Kārtavīrya), O youthful prince. (1—4)

दो०—मातु पितहि जनि सोचबस करसि महीसकिसोर ।
गर्भन्ह के अर्भक दलन परसु मोर अति घोर ॥ २७२ ॥

"Do not bring woe to your parents, O princely lad, My most cruel axe has exterminated even unborn offspring in the womb." (272)

चौ०—बिहसि लखनु बोले मृदु बानी । अहो मुनीसु महा भटमानी ॥
पुनि पुनि मोहि देखाव कुठारू । चहत उड़ावन फूँकि पहारू ॥ १ ॥
इहाँ कुम्हड़बतिया कोउ नाहीं । जे तरजनी देखि मरि जाहीं ॥
देखि कुठारु सरासन बाना । मैं कछु कहा सहित अभिमाना ॥ २ ॥

भृगुसुत समुझि जनेउ बिलोकी । जो कछु कहहु सहउँ रिस रोकी ॥
सुर महिसुर हरिजन अरु गाई । हमरें कुल इन्ह पर न सुराई ॥ ३ ॥
बधें पापु अपकीरति हारें । मारतहूँ पा परिअ तुम्हारें ॥
कोटि कुलिस सम बचनु तुम्हारा । ब्यर्थ धरहु धनु बान कुठारा ॥ ४ ॥

Lakṣmaṇa smilingly retorted in a mild tone, "Ah, the great sage considers himself an extraordinary warrior! He flaunts his axe before me again and again, as if he would blow away a mountain with a mere puff of breath. Here there is no pumpkin in the bud that would wither away as soon as an index finger is raised against it. It was only when I saw you armed with an axe and a bow and arrows that I spoke with some pride Now that I understand you are a descendant of Bhṛgu and perceive a sacred thread on your person, I suppress my anger and put up with whatever you say. In our family valour is never shown against gods, the Brahmans, devotees of Śrī Hari and the cow; for by killing any of these we incur sin while a defeat at their hands will bring disrepute on us. We should throw ourselves at your feet even if you strike us. Every word of yours is as incisive as millions of thunderbolts; the bow and arrows and the axe are, therefore, an unnecessary burden to you. (1—4)

दो०—जो बिलोकि अनुचित कहेउँ छमहु महामुनि धीर ।
सुनि सरोष भृगुबंसमनि बोले गिरा गभीर ॥ २७३ ॥

"Pardon me, O great and illumined hermit, if I have said anything unseemly at the sight of your weapons." Hearing this, the jewel of Bhṛghu's race furiously rejoined in a deep voice:— (273)

चौ०—कौसिक सुनहु मंद यहु बालकु । कुटिल काल बस निज कुल घालकु ॥
भानु बंस राकेस कलंकू । निपट निरंकुस अबुध असंकू ॥ १ ॥
काल कवलु होइहि छन माहीं । कहउँ पुकारि खोरि मोहि नाहीं ॥
तुम्ह हटकहु जौं चहहु उबारा । कहि प्रतापु बलु रोषु हमारा ॥ २ ॥
लखन कहेउ मुनि सुजसु तुम्हारा । तुम्हहि अछत को बरनै पारा ॥
अपने मुहँ तुम्ह आपनि करनी । बार अनेक भाँति बहु बरनी ॥ ३ ॥
नहिं संतोषु त पुनि कछु कहहू । जनि रिस रोकि दुसह दुख सहहू ॥
बीरब्रती तुम्ह धीर अछोभा । गारी देत न पावहु सोभा ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, O Viśwāmitra: this boy is stupid and perverse. He is in the grip of death himself and will bring destruction on his whole family. A dark spot on the moon-like solar race, he is utterly unruly, senseless and reckless. The very next moment he shall find himself in the jaws of death: I proclaim it at the top of my voice and none should blame me for it. Forbid him if you would save him, telling him of my glory, might and fury." Said Lakṣmaṇa, "Holy sir, so long as you live who else can expatiate on your bright glory? With your own lips you have recounted your exploits in diverse ways more than once. If you are not yet satisfied, tell us something more; do not undergo a

severe trial by putting any restraint upon your anger. You have assumed the role of a hero and are resolute and imperturbable; it is unbecoming of you to pour abuses.

(1—4)

दो०—सूर समर करनी करहिं कहि न जनावहिं आपु ।
बिद्यमान रन पाइ रिपु कायर कथहिं प्रतापु ॥ २७४ ॥

"Heroes perform valiant deeds in fight, but never indulge in self-advertisement. Finding before them a foe in battle, it is cowards who boast of their own glory. (274)

चौ०—तुम्ह तौ कालु हाँक जनु लावा । बार बार मोहि लागि बोलावा ॥
सुनत लखन के बचन कठोरा । परसु सुधारि धरेउ कर घोरा ॥ १ ॥
अब जनि देइ दोसु मोहि लोगू । कटुबादी बालकु बधजोगू ॥
बाल बिलोकि बहुत मैं बाँचा । अब यहु मरनिहार भा साँचा ॥ २ ॥
कौसिक कहा छमिअ अपराधू । बाल दोष गुन गनहिं न साधू ॥
खर कुठार मैं अकरुन कोही । आगें अपराधी गुरुद्रोही ॥ ३ ॥
उतर देत छोड़उँ बिनु मारें । केवल कौसिक सील तुम्हारें ॥
न त एहि काटि कुठार कठोरें । गुरहि उरिन होतेउँ श्रम थोरें ॥ ४ ॥

"You seem to have Death at your beck and call and summon him again and again for my sake !" Hearing Lakṣmaṇa's harsh words Paraśurāma closed his hand upon his terrible axe. "After this let no one blame me; this sharp-tongued boy deserves his death. I have spared him long on account of his being a child; he is now surely going to die." Said Viśwāmitra, "Pardon his offence; holy men take no notice of the merits and demerits of a child." "Sharp-edged is my axe, while I am pitiless and furious; and here stands before me an offender and an enemy of my Guru. Even though he gives a retort, I spare his life solely out of regard for you, O Viśwāmitra. Or else, hacking him to pieces with this cruel axe, I would have easily repaid the debt I have owed to my Guru."

(1—4)

दो०—गाधिसूनु कह हृदयँ हँसि मुनिहि हरिअरइ सूझ ।
अयमय खाँड़ न ऊखमय अजहुँ न बूझ अबूझ ॥ २७५ ॥

Said Gādhi's son (Viśwāmitra) smiling within himself, "Everything looks green to the sage (Paraśurāma); it is, however, the steel sword that he is faced with and not with sugar extracted from a sugar-cane (that one could easily gulp). It is a pity that he does not understand and still persists in his ignorance*. (275)

* This has reference to a popular saying "A man who loses his eyesight in the month of Śrāvaṇa (corresponding roughly to August), when the whole landscape is green, visualizes everything as green." Viśwāmitra thereby suggests that Paraśurāma was blind so far as the greatness of Śrī Rāma is concerned and imagined that the latter was as easy to handle as the other Kṣatriyas whom he could easily vanquish in battle. Again there is a pun on the word 'Khāṇḍa' in the original, which means both a sword and sugar

चौ०—कहेउ लखन मुनि सीलु तुम्हारा। को नहिं जान बिदित संसारा॥
माता पितहि उरिन भए नीकें। गुर रिनु रहा सोचु बड़ जीकें॥ १॥
सो जनु हमरेहि माथे काढ़ा। दिन चलि गए ब्याज बड़ बाढ़ा॥
अब आनिअ ब्यवहरिआ बोली। तुरत देउँ मैं थैली खोली॥ २॥
सुनि कटु बचन कुठार सुधारा। हाय हाय सब सभा पुकारा॥
भृगुबर परसु देखावहु मोही। बिप्र बिचारि बचउँ नृपद्रोही॥ ३॥
मिले न कबहुँ सुभट रन गाढ़े। द्विज देवता घरहि के बाढ़े॥
अनुचित कहि सब लोग पुकारे। रघुपति सयनहिं लखनु नेवारे॥ ४॥

Said Lakṣmaṇa, "Is there anyone, O good sage, who is not aware of your gentle disposition, so well known throughout the world ? You have fully paid the debt you owed to your parents;* the only debt which now remains to be paid by you is the one you owe to your Guru, and that has been vexing your mind not a little. It looks as if you had incurred the debt on our account; and since a considerable time has now elapsed a heavy interest has accumulated thereon. Now you get the creditor here and I will at once repay him from my own purse." Hearing these sarcastic remarks Paraśurāma grasped his axe and the whole assembly cried "Alack ! Alack !"' "O chief of Bhṛgus, you are still threatening me with your axe; but I am sparing you only because I hold you to be a Brahman, O enemy of princes. You have never met champions staunch in fight; You have grown important in your own little home, O holy Brahman." Everyone exclaimed, "This is wholly undesirable !" The Lord of Raghus now becked Lakṣmaṇa to stop. (1—4)

दो०—लखन उतर आहुति सरिस भृगुबर कोपु कृसानु।
बढ़त देखि जल सम बचन बोले रघुकुलभानु॥ २७६॥

Perceiving the flames of Paraśurāma's passion grow with the pouring of oblation in the form of Lakṣmaṇa's rejoinder, the Sun of Raghu's race spoke words like water. (276)

चौ०—नाथ करहु बालक पर छोहू। सूध दूधमुख करिअ न कोहू॥
जौं पै प्रभु प्रभाउ कछु जाना। तौ कि बराबरि करत अयाना॥ १॥
जौं लरिका कछु अचगरि करहीं। गुर पितु मातु मोद मन भरहीं॥
करिअ कृपा सिसु सेवक जानी। तुम्ह सम सील धीर मुनि ग्यानी॥ २॥

* There is a sarcastic allusion here to two notable incidents in Paraśurāma's life. We are told in the Purāṇas how Paraśurāma killed his own mother at the bidding of his father Jamadagni, who had got incensed at her returning from a river rather late. Pleased with his obedience Jamadagni insisted on his asking for a boon. At this Parasurāma prayed for the restoration of his mother's life and his prayer was immediately granted. His mother was brought to life again and did not even remember the cruel act of her son. On another occasion, Paraśurāma's father Jamadagni was slain by the followers of King Sahasrabāhu in order to avenge themselves of their leader's death at Paraśurāma's hands and the latter retaliated by extirpating not only the descendants of Sahasrārjuna but the whole Kṣatriya race gradually.

राम बचन सुनि कछुक जुड़ाने । कहि कछु लखनु बहुरि मुसुकाने ॥
हँसत देखि नख सिख रिस ब्यापी । राम तोर भ्राता बड़ पापी ॥ ३ ॥
गौर सरीर स्याम मन माहीं । कालकूटमुख पयमुख नाहीं ॥
सहज टेढ़ अनुहरइ न तोही । नीचु मीचु सम देख न मोही ॥ ४ ॥

"My Lord, have compassion on a child; and wreak not your wrath on this guileless youngster (*lit.*, who has the mother's milk still on its lips). If he had any idea of your might, how could he be so foolish as to affront you ? If children play some pranks, their teacher and parents are in raptures at it; therefore, take pity on him, knowing him to be a child and your servant. For you are an even-minded, good-tempered, forbearing and illumined anchorite." On hearing Śrī Rāma's words Paraśurāma cooled down a little; but uttering something Lakṣmaṇa smiled again. Seeing him smile, Paraśurāma flushed all over with rage and said "Rāma, your brother is too wicked. Though fair of hue, he is black at heart; he has deadly poison, and not the mother's milk on his lips. Perverse by nature, he does not take after you, nor does this vile imp regard me as the very image of Death." (1—4)

दो०—लखन कहेउ हँसि सुनहु मुनि क्रोधु पाप कर मूल ।
जेहि बस जन अनुचित करहिं चरहिं बिस्व प्रतिकूल ॥ २७७ ॥

Lakṣmaṇa smilingly said, "Listen, holy sir: passion is the root of sin. Swayed by it men perpetrate unseemly acts and indulge in misanthropic activities. (277)

चौ०—मैं तुम्हार अनुचर मुनिराया । परिहरि कोपु करिअ अब दाया ॥
टूट चाप नहिं जुरिहि रिसाने । बैठिअ होइहिं पाय पिराने ॥ १ ॥
जौं अति प्रिय तौ करिअ उपाई । जोरिअ कोउ बड़ गुनी बोलाई ॥
बोलत लखनहिं जनकु डेराहीं । मष्ट करहु अनुचित भल नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
थर थर काँपहिं पुर नर नारी । छोट कुमार खोट बड़ भारी ॥
भृगुपति सुनि सुनि निरभय बानी । रिस तन जरइ होइ बल हानी ॥ ३ ॥
बोले रामहि देइ निहोरा । बचउँ बिचारि बंधु लघु तोरा ॥
मनु मलीन तनु सुंदर कैसें । बिष रस भरा कनक घटु जैसें ॥ ४ ॥

"I am your servant, O chief of sages; put away your wrath and show mercy upon me Anger will not mend the broken bow Pray sit down; your legs must be aching. If you are very fond of it, let us devise some means to mend it by calling in some expert." Janaka was frightened at Lakṣmaṇa's words and said, "Pray be quiet; it is not good to transgress the limits of propriety." The people of the city trembled like aspen leaves; they said to themselves, "The younger prince is really very naughty." As the chief of Bhṛgus heard the fearless words of Lakṣmaṇa, his whole body burnt with rage and his strength diminished. In a condescending manner he said to Rāma, "I am sparing the boy because I know he is your younger brother So fair without and foul within, he resembles a jar of gold full of poison." (1—4)

दो०—सुनि लछिमन बिहसे बहुरि नयन तरेरे राम ।
गुर समीप गवने सकुचि परिहरि बानी बाम ॥ २७८ ॥

At this Lakṣmaṇa laughed again, but Śrī Rāma cast an angry look on him. Therefore, putting away all petulance of speech he submissively went up to his Guru. (278)

चौ०—अति बिनीत मृदु सीतल बानी । बोले रामु जोरि जुग पानी ॥
सुनहु नाथ तुम्ह सहज सुजाना । बालक बचनु करिअ नहिं काना ॥ १ ॥
बररै बालकु एकु सुभाऊ । इन्हहि न संत बिदूषहिं काऊ ॥
तेहिं नाहीं कछु काज बिगारा । अपराधी मैं नाथ तुम्हारा ॥ २ ॥
कृपा कोपु बधु बँधब गोसाईं । मो पर करिअ दास की नाईं ॥
कहिअ बेगि जेहि बिधि रिस जाई । मुनिनायक सोइ करौं उपाई ॥ ३ ॥
कह मुनि राम जाइ रिस कैसें । अजहुँ अनुज तव चितव अनैसें ॥
एहि कें कंठ कुठारु न दीन्हा । तौ मैं काह कोपु करि कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

Joining both His palms together and speaking in most humble, gentle and placid tones Śrī Rāma said, "I pray you, my lord: wise as you are by nature, pay no heed to the words of a child. A wasp and a child have a like disposition; saints never find fault with them. Besides, the boy has done you no harm; it is I, my lord, who have offended you. Therefore, your reverence, deal to me as your servant whatever you please, whether it be a favour or frown, death or captivity. Tell me quickly the means, O chief of sages, by which your anger may be appeased; I shall do accordingly." Said the sage, "How can my passion be pacified, O Rāma, when your younger brother is still looking mischievously at me. So long as I do not cut his throat with my axe, my wrath is ineffectual. (1-4)

दो०—गर्भ स्रवहिं अवनिप रवनि सुनि कुठार गति घोर ।
परसु अछत देखउँ जिअत बैरी भूपकिसोर ॥ २७९ ॥

"At the very news of the cruel doings of my axe the consorts of kings miscarry. To think that having the same axe still at my service I should see this princeling, my enemy, alive! (279)

चौ०—बहइ न हाथु दहइ रिस छाती । भा कुठारु कुंठित नृपघाती ॥
भयउ बाम बिधि फिरेउ सुभाऊ । मोरे हृदयँ कृपा कसि काऊ ॥ १ ॥
आजु दया दुखु दुसह सहावा । सुनि सौमित्रि बिहसि सिरु नावा ॥
बाउ कृपा मूरति अनुकूला । बोलत बचन झरत जनु फूला ॥ २ ॥
जौं पै कृपाँ जरिहिं मुनि गाता । क्रोध भएँ तनु राख बिधाता ॥
देखु जनक हठि बालकु एहू । कीन्ह चहत जड़ जमपुर गेहू ॥ ३ ॥
बेगि करहु किन आँखिन्ह ओटा । देखत छोट खोट नृप ढोटा ॥
बिहसे लखनु कहा मन माहीं । मूदें आँखि कतहुँ कोउ नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"My hand moves not, though passion consumes my breast; while this axe, which has slain kings without number, has gone blunt. Fate has turned against me; that is why I find my nature changed. Otherwise compassion at any time is unknown to my heart. My tenderness of feeling has imposed on me a severe strain today." On hearing this the son of Sumitrā bowed his head with a smile. "The breeze of your benevolence is so befitting your frame; the words you speak appear as though blossoms drop from a tree. O reverend sir, when compassion sets your whole frame on fire, God help you when you are angry." "Look here, Janaka, this stupid boy in his perversity intends to migrate to the region of Death. Why not put him out of my sight? Though small to look at, the princeling is yet so wicked!" Lakṣmaṇa smilingly said to himself, "Shut your eyes and the whole world will vanish out of your sight." (1–4)

दो॰—परसुरामु तब राम प्रति बोले उर अति क्रोधु ।
संभु सरासनु तोरि सठ करसि हमार प्रबोधु ॥ २८० ॥

Then Paraśurāma spoke to Rāma, his heart boiling with rage, "Having broken Śambhu's bow, O wretch, do you now teach me? (280)

चौ॰—बंधु कहइ कटु संमत तोरें । तू छल बिनय करसि कर जोरें ॥
करु परितोषु मोर संग्रामा । नाहिं त छाड़ कहाउब रामा ॥ १ ॥
छलु तजि करहि समरु सिवद्रोही । बंधु सहित न त मारउँ तोही ॥
भृगुपति बकहिं कुठार उठाएँ । मन मुसुकाहिं रामु सिर नाएँ ॥ २ ॥
गुनह लखन कर हम पर रोषू । कतहुँ सुधाइहु ते बड़ दोषू ॥
टेढ़ जानि सब बंदइ काहू । बक्र चंद्रमहि ग्रसइ न राहू ॥ ३ ॥
राम कहेउ रिस तजिअ मुनीसा । कर कुठारु आगें यह सीसा ॥
जेहिं रिस जाइ करिअ सोइ स्वामी । मोहि जानिअ आपन अनुगामी ॥ ४ ॥

"It is with your connivance that your brother addresses such pungent words to me; while you make false entreaties with joined palms. Either give me satisfaction in combat, or forswear your name of 'Rāma'. Give battle to me, O enemy of Śiva, without taking recourse to any wily trick; or else I will despatch you and your brother both." While the chief of Bhṛgus thus raved with his axe raised on high, Śrī Rāma smiled within Himself, bowing His head to the sage, "While the fault is Lakṣmaṇa's, the sage's wrath is against me. Sometimes meekness too begets much evil. A crooked man is reverenced by all; the crescent moon is not devoured by the demon Rāhu." Said Rāma, "Cease from wrath, O lord of sages; the axe is in your hand, while my head is before you. Do that, my lord, which may pacify your anger; know me to be your servant. (1–4)

दो॰—प्रभुहि सेवकहि समरु कस तजहु बिप्रबर रोसु ।
बेषु बिलोकें कहेसि कछु बालकहू नहिं दोसु ॥ २८१ ॥

"How can there be any duel between a master and his servant ? Give up your anger, O great Brahman; it is only because he saw you in the garb of a warrior that the boy said something to you and he cannot be blamed for it. (281)

चौ०—देखि कुठार बान धनु धारी। भै लरिकहि रिस बीरु बिचारी॥
नामु जान पै तुम्हहि न चीन्हा। बंस सुभायँ उतरु तेहिं दीन्हा॥ १॥
जौं तुम्ह औतेहु मुनि की नाईं। पद रज सिर सिसु धरत गोसाईं॥
छमहु चूक अनजानत केरी। चहिअ बिप्र उर कृपा घनेरी॥ २॥
हमहि तुम्हहि सरिबरि कसि नाथा। कहहु न कहाँ चरन कहँ माथा॥
राम मात्र लघु नाम हमारा। परसु सहित बड़ नाम तोहारा॥ ३॥
देव एकु गुनु धनुष हमारें। नव गुन परम पुनीत तुम्हारें॥
सब प्रकार हम तुम्ह सन हारे। छमहु बिप्र अपराध हमारे॥ ४॥

"Seeing you equipped with an axe, arrows and bow, the boy took you for a champion and got excited. Although he knew you by name, he did not recognize you in person and answered you according to his lineage. If you had come as a sage, the child, O holy sir, would have placed the dust of your feet on his head. Forgive the error of one who did not know you; a Brahman should have plenty of mercy in his heart. What comparison, my lord, can there be between you and me ? Tell me if there is any affinity between the head and feet. Mine is a small name consisting of the single word 'Rāma'; whereas yours is a long one, having the word 'Paraśu' prefixed to 'Rāma'. Whereas there is only one string to my bow, yours has nine most sacred threads (viz., the Brahmanical cord). I am thus inferior to you in every way; therefore, O holy sir, forgive my faults." (1—4)

दो०—बार बार मुनि बिप्रबर कहा राम सन राम।
बोले भृगुपति सरुष हसि तहूँ बंधु सम बाम॥ २८२॥

Again and again did Rāma address His namesake as a sage and as a great Brahman, till the chief of Bhṛgus exclaimed in his fury, "You are as perverse as your younger brother ! (282)

चौ०—निपटहिं द्विज करि जानहि मोही। मैं जस बिप्र सुनावउँ तोही॥
चाप स्रुवा सर आहुति जानू। कोपु मोर अति घोर कृसानू॥ १॥
समिधि सेन चतुरंग सुहाई। महा महीप भए पसु आई॥
मैं एहिं परसु काटि बलि दीन्हे। समर जग्य जप कोटिन्ह कीन्हे॥ २॥
मोर प्रभाउ बिदित नहिं तोरें। बोलसि निदरि बिप्र के भोरें॥
भंजेउ चापु दापु बड़ बाढ़ा। अहमिति मनहुँ जीति जगु ठाढ़ा॥ ३॥
राम कहा मुनि कहहु बिचारी। रिस अति बड़ि लघु चूक हमारी॥
छुअतहिं टूट पिनाक पुराना। मैं केहि हेतु करौं अभिमाना॥ ४॥

"You know me to be a mere Brahman; I tell you what kind of a Brahman I am. Know that the bow is my sacrificial ladle, the arrows my oblation and my wrath, the blazing fire; the brilliant fourfold forces

(consisting of the horse, the elephant, the chariots and foot-soldiers) are the fuel; and mighty princes have served as victims, whom I have cut to pieces with this very axe and offered as sacrifice In this way I have performed millions of sacrifices in the shape of armed conflicts, accompanied by the muttering of sacred formulas in the shape of war-cries. My glory is not known to you; that is why you address me in contemptuous terms mistaking me for a mere Brahman. Since you have broken the bow, your arrogance has transgressed all limits; in your self-esteem you stand as if you have conquered the whole world." Said Rāma, "O sage, think before you speak; your anger is out of all proportions with my error, which is a trifling one. Worn out as it was, the bow broke at my mere touch. What reason have I to be proud?

(1—4)

दो०—जौं हम निदरहिं बिप्र बदि सत्य सुनहु भृगुनाथ।
तौ अस को जग सुभटु जेहि भय बस नावहिं माथ ॥ २८३ ॥

"Hear the truth, O lord of the Bhṛgus: if, as you say, I treat you with disrespect because you are a Brahman, who is that gallant warrior in this world to whom I would bow my head out of fear?

(283)

चौ०—देव दनुज भूपति भट नाना। समबल अधिक होउ बलवाना ॥
जौं रन हमहि पचारै कोऊ। लरहिं सुखेन कालु किन होऊ ॥ १ ॥
छत्रिय तनु धरि समर सकाना। कुल कलंकु तेहिं पावँर आना ॥
कहउँ सुभाउ न कुलहि प्रसंसी। कालहु डरहिं न रन रघुबंसी ॥ २ ॥
बिप्रबंस कै असि प्रभुताई। अभय होइ जो तुम्हहि डेराई ॥
सुनि मृदु गूढ़ बचन रघुपति के। उघरे पटल परसुधर मति के ॥ ३ ॥
राम रमापति कर धनु लेहू। खैंचहु मिटै मोर संदेहू ॥
देत चापु आपुहिं चलि गयऊ। परसुराम मन बिसमय भयऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"A god, a demon, a king or a body of warriors, whether My equal in strength or more powerful than myself,—should any of these challenge me to combat, I would gladly fight with him, no matter if it is Death himself. For he who is born as a Kṣatriya, and is yet afraid of fighting, is a veritable wretch and has brought a slur on his lineage I tell you in my natural way and not by way of a tribute to my race: Raghu s descendants do not tremble to meet in fight even Death. Such is the glory of the Brahman race that he who is afraid of you (Brahmans) is rid of all fear." When he heard these soft yet profound words of Śrī Rāma, Paraśurāma's mind was disillusioned. "O Rāma, take this bow of Ramā's lord and draw it, so that my doubts may be cleared."* As Paraśurāma offered his bow it passed into Rāma's hands of its own accord, and Paraśurāma felt amazed at this. (1—4)

दो०—जाना राम प्रभाउ तब पुलक प्रफुल्लित गात।
जोरि पानि बोले बचन हृदयँ न प्रेमु अमात ॥ २८४ ॥

* Paraśurāma had got this bow from God Viṣṇu Himself, who had told him that when the Lord descended on the earth in the form of Śrī Rāma, his own life's work would have ended and the bow would pass into the hands of Śrī Rāma.

He then recognized Śrī Rāma's might and his whole frame was thrilled with joy and his hair stood on end. Joining his palms together he addressed the following words to Śrī Rāma, his heart bursting with emotion:— (284)

चौ०—जय रघुबंस बनज बन भानू । गहन दनुज कुल दहन कृसानू ॥
जय सुर बिप्र धेनु हितकारी । जय मद मोह कोह भ्रम हारी ॥ १ ॥
बिनय सील करुना गुन सागर । जयति बचन रचना अति नागर ॥
सेवक सुखद सुभग सब अंगा । जय सरीर छबि कोटि अनंगा ॥ २ ॥
करौं काह मुख एक प्रसंसा । जय महेस मन मानस हंसा ॥
अनुचित बहुत कहेउँ अग्याता । छमहु छमामंदिर दोउ भ्राता ॥ ३ ॥
कहि जय जय जय रघुकुलकेतू । भृगुपति गए बनहि तप हेतू ॥
अपभयँ कुटिल महीप डेराने । जहँ तहँ कायर गवँहिं पराने ॥ ४ ॥

"Glory to Śrī Rāma, who delights Raghu's line even as the sun delights a cluster of lotuses ! Glory to the Fire that consumes the forest of the demon race ! Glory to the Benefactor of gods, Brahmans and cows ! Glory to Him who takes away pride, ignorance, passion and delusion ! Glory to Him who is an ocean of humility, amiability, compassion and goodness and a past-master in the art of speech. Glory to the Delighter of His servants and to Him who is graceful of every limb and whose form possesses the beauty of millions of Cupids ! How can I with one tongue utter Your praises ? Glory to Him who sports in the mind of the great Lord Śiva as a swan in the Mansarovar lake ! In my ignorance I have said much that was unseemly; therefore pardon me, both brothers, abodes of forgiveness that You are. Glory, glory, all glory to the Chief of Raghu's race !" So saying, the lord of Bhṛgus withdrew to the forest to practise penance. The wicked kings were all seized with imaginary fears and the cowards quietly fled in all directions. (1—4)

दो०—देवन्ह दीन्हीं दुंदुभीं प्रभु पर बरषहिं फूल ।
हरषे पुर नर नारि सब मिटी मोहमय सूल ॥ २८५ ॥

The gods sounded their kettledrums and rained down flowers on the Lord. All the people of the city rejoiced and their heart's agony, born of ignorance, disappeared. (285)

चौ०—अति गहगहे बाजने बाजे । सबहिं मनोहर मंगल साजे ॥
जूथ जूथ मिलि सुमुखि सुनयनीं । करहिं गान कल कोकिलबयनीं ॥ १ ॥
सुखु बिदेह कर बरनि न जाई । जन्मदरिद्र मनहुँ निधि पाई ॥
बिगत त्रास भइ सीय सुखारी । जनु बिधु उदयँ चकोरकुमारी ॥ २ ॥
जनक कीन्ह कौसिकहि प्रनामा । प्रभु प्रसाद धनु भंजेउ रामा ॥
मोहि कृतकृत्य कीन्ह दुहुँ भाईं । अब जो उचित सो कहिअ गोसाईं ॥ ३ ॥
कह मुनि सुनु नरनाथ प्रबीना । रहा बिबाहु चाप आधीना ॥
टूटतहीं धनु भयउ बिबाहू । सुर नर नाग बिदित सब काहू ॥ ४ ॥

There was a tumultuous clash of musical instruments and everyone displayed charming and auspicious objects. Troops of fair-faced, bright-eyed damsels sang melodious songs in chorus, their voice resembling the notes of the cuckoo. Janaka's joy was beyond description, as that of a born beggar who has found a treasure. Sītā was rid of Her fears and was as glad as a young of a *Chakora* bird at the rising of the moon. Janaka made obeisance before Kauśika and said, "It is due to your grace, my lord, that Śrī Rāma has been able to break the bow. The two brothers have gained me my purpose; pray tell me now, reverend sir, what it behoves me to do." Said the sage, "Listen, wise king: the marriage depended on the bow, and took place directly the bow broke, as is well-known to all, including gods, human beings and Nāgas. (1—4)

दो०—तदपि जाइ तुम्ह करहु अब जथा बंस ब्यवहारु ।
बूझि बिप्र कुलबृद्ध गुर बेद बिदित आचारु ॥ २८६ ॥

"Nevertheless you now go and perform according to the family usage whatever practices are prescribed in the Veda, after consulting the Brahmans, the elders of your family, and your own preceptor (Śatānanda). (286)

चौ०—दूत अवधपुर पठवहु जाई । आनहिं नृप दसरथहि बोलाई ॥
मुदित राउ कहि भलेहिं कृपाला । पठए दूत बोलि तेहि काला ॥ १ ॥
बहुरि महाजन सकल बोलाए । आइ सबन्हि सादर सिर नाए ॥
हाट बाट मंदिर सुरबासा । नगरु सँवारहु चारिहुँ पासा ॥ २ ॥
हरषि चले निज निज गृह आए । पुनि परिचारक बोलि पठाए ॥
रचहु बिचित्र बितान बनाई । सिर धरि बचन चले सचु पाई ॥ ३ ॥
पठए बोलि गुनी तिन्ह नाना । जे बितान बिधि कुसल सुजाना ॥
बिधिहि बंदि तिन्ह कीन्ह अरंभा । बिरचे कनक कदलि के खंभा ॥ ४ ॥

"Go and despatch to the city of Ayodhyā messengers who may invite King Daśaratha and bring him here." Janaka gladly responded, "Very well, gracious sir," and summoning the messengers despatched them that very moment. He then summoned the leading citizens, and they all came and respectfully bowed their head. "Decorate the bazars, streets, houses, temples and the whole city on all its four sides," was the royal command. They returned in joy, each to his own house. The king then sent for his own servants and instructed them: "Erect pavilions of all kinds with due care." Bowing to the king's orders they returned glad of heart, and sent for a number of clever artisans skilled in erecting pavilions. Invoking Brahmā they set to work and made pillars of gold in the shape of plantain trees— (1—4)

दो०—हरित मनिन्ह के पत्र फल पदुमराग के फूल ।
रचना देखि बिचित्र अति मनु बिरंचि कर भूल ॥ २८७ ॥

—With leaves and fruits of emeralds and blossoms of rubies; seeing this most marvellous specimen of art the Creator himself was lost in bewilderment. (287)

चौ०—बेनु हरित मनिमय सब कीन्हे । सरल सपरब परहिं नहिं चीन्हे ॥
कनक कलित अहिबेलि बनाई । लखि नहिं परइ सपरन सुहाई ॥ १ ॥
तेहि के रचि पचि बंध बनाए । बिच बिच मुकुता दाम सुहाए ॥
मानिक मरकत कुलिस पिरोजा । चीरि कोरि पचि रचे सरोजा ॥ २ ॥
किए भृंग बहुरंग बिहंगा । गुंजहिं कूजहिं पवन प्रसंगा ॥
सुर प्रतिमा खंभन गढ़ि काढ़ीं । मंगल द्रव्य लिएँ सब ठाढ़ीं ॥ ३ ॥
चौकें भाँति अनेक पुराईं । सिंधुर मनिमय सहज सुहाईं ॥ ४ ॥

The bamboo sticks were all made of emeralds; they were so straight and knotted that they could not be distinguished from real ones. Creepers known by the name of Piper-betle (the leaves of which are chewed in India with areca-nut parings) were artistically fashioned in gold and looked so charming with their leaves that they could not be marked as artificial. These creepers were intertwined into so many cords (for holding the bamboos together) with beautiful strings of pearls inserted here and there. After much cutting, carving and inlaying they made lotuses of rubies, emeralds, diamonds and turquoises. They also fashioned bees and birds of varied plumage, which buzzed and whistled in the rustling breeze. On the pillars they sculptured images of gods, all standing with articles of good omen in their hands. Squares were drawn on the floor in various naturally charming devices and filled in with elephant pearls. (1—4)

दो०—सौरभ पल्लव सुभग सुठि किए नीलमनि कोरि ।
हेम बौर मरकत घवरि लसत पाटमय डोरि ॥ २८८ ॥

They made most lovely mango-leaves of graven sapphires with blossoms of gold and bunches of emerald fruits glistening on silken cords. (288)

चौ०—रचे रुचिर बर बंदनिवारे । मनहुँ मनोभवँ फंद सँवारे ॥
मंगल कलस अनेक बनाए । ध्वज पताक पट चमर सुहाए ॥ १ ॥
दीप मनोहर मनिमय नाना । जाइ न बरनि बिचित्र बिताना ॥
जेहिं मंडप दुलहिनि बैदेही । सो बरनै असि मति कबि केही ॥ २ ॥
दूलहु रामु रूप गुन सागर । सो बितानु तिहुँ लोक उजागर ॥
जनक भवन कै सोभा जैसी । गृह गृह प्रति पुर देखिअ तैसी ॥ ३ ॥
जेहिं तेरहुति तेहि समय निहारी । तेहि लघु लगहिं भुवन दस चारी ॥
जो संपदा नीच गृह सोहा । सो बिलोकि सुरनायक मोहा ॥ ४ ॥

They further made charming and excellent festoons, which looked like so many nooses prepared as it were by Cupid. They also put up many auspicious vases as well as beautiful flags and banners, curtains and chowries. The marvellous pavilion with a number of beautiful lamps consisting of brilliant gems was beyond description. What poet has the wit wherewith to describe the pavilion which is going to shelter Videha's Daughter as the bride ? The canopy which is going to hold Śrī Rāma, the ocean of beauty and perfection, as the bridegroom, must be the glory of all the three worlds. The splendour

that belonged to King Janaka's palace was to be seen in every house of that city; to him who beheld Tirhut (Janaka's capital) during that time all the fourteen spheres* appeared of small account. The prosperity that reigned in the house of the humblest citizen was enough to fascinate even the lord of celestials.

(1—4)

दो०—बसइ नगर जेहिं लच्छि करि कपट नारि बर बेषु ।
तेहि पुर कै सोभा कहत सकुचहिं सारद सेषु ॥ २८९ ॥

The magnificence of the city wherein dwelt Goddess Lakṣmī in the charming disguise of a mortal woman made even Śāradā (the goddess of eloquence) and (the thousand-tongued) Śeṣa falter in describing it.

(289)

चौ०—पहुँचे दूत राम पुर पावन । हरषे नगर बिलोकि सुहावन ॥
भूप द्वार तिन्ह खबरि जनाई । दसरथ नृप सुनि लिए बोलाई ॥ १ ॥
करि प्रनामु तिन्ह पाती दीन्ही । मुदित महीप आपु उठि लीन्ही ॥
बारि बिलोचन बाँचत पाती । पुलक गात आई भरि छाती ॥ २ ॥
रामु लखनु उर कर बर चीठी । रहि गए कहत न खाटी मीठी ॥
पुनि धरि धीर पत्रिका बाँची । हरषी सभा बात सुनि साँची ॥ ३ ॥
खेलत रहे तहाँ सुधि पाई । आए भरतु सहित हित भाई ॥
पूछत अति सनेहँ सकुचाई । तात कहाँ तें पाती आई ॥ ४ ॥

Janaka's messengers arrived at Śrī Rāma's sacred birth-place and rejoiced to behold the charming city. They sent in word at the entrance of the royal palace; hearing of their arrival King Daśaratha summoned them to his presence. With due reverence they delivered the letter; and the king in his joy rose to receive it in person. As he read the letter, tears rushed to his eyes; the hair on his body stood erect and his heart was full. With Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa in his heart and the valuable letter in his hand, he remained mute and could not utter a word, either good or bad. Then, recovering himself, he read out the letter, and the court rejoiced to hear the authentic news. Obtaining the news at the very spot where he had been playing about Bharata came with his playmates and brother (Śatrughna), and with the utmost modesty and affection asked, "Father, where has the letter come from ?

(1—4)

दो०—कुसल प्रानप्रिय बंधु दोउ अहहिं कहहु केहिं देस ।
सुनि सनेह साने बचन बाची बहुरि नरेस ॥ २९० ॥

"Are my two beloved brothers doing well and in what land do they happen to be ?" On hearing these words steeped in love the king read the letter over again.

(290)

* According to Hindu scriptures the universe is divided into fourteen spheres, seven higher and seven lower. In their ascending order the seven higher spheres are named as Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Swaḥ, Mahaḥ, Janaḥ, Tapaḥ and Satyam; while the lower seven are in their descending order named as Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala, Mahātala, Rasātala and Pātāla.

चौ०—सुनि पातीं पुलके दोउ भ्राता। अधिक सनेहु समात न गाता॥
प्रीति पुनीत भरत कै देखी। सकल सभाँ सुखु लहेउ बिसेषी॥ १॥
तब नृप दूत निकट बैठारे। मधुर मनोहर बचन उचारे॥
भैआ कहहु कुसल दोउ बारे। तुम्ह नीकें निज नयन निहारे॥ २॥
स्यामल गौर धरें धनु भाथा। बय किसोर कौसिक मुनि साथा॥
पहिचानहु तुम्ह कहहु सुभाऊ। प्रेम बिबस पुनि पुनि कह राऊ॥ ३॥
जा दिन तें मुनि गए लवाई। तब तें आजु साँचि सुधि पाई॥
कहहु बिदेह कवन बिधि जाने। सुनि प्रिय बचन दूत मुसुकाने॥ ४॥

On hearing the letter the two brothers experienced a thrill of joy; their whole frame was bursting with an excess of emotion. The whole court was particularly delighted to see Bharata's unalloyed love. The king then seated the messengers close by him and spoke to them in sweet and winning tones: "Tell me, friends, are the two boys well ? Have you seen them well with your own eyes ? The one dark and the other fair of hue, they are equipped with bow and quiver and are of tender age and accompanied by the sage Kauśika. Do you recognize them ? If so, tell me something about their temperament." Overwhelmed with love the king asked thus again and again. "From the day the sage took them away it is only today that I have obtained authentic news about them. Tell me how King Videha was able to know them." At these fond words the messengers smiled. (1—4)

दो०—सुनहु महीपति मुकुट मनि तुम्ह सम धन्य न कोउ।
रामु लखनु जिन्ह के तनय बिस्व बिभूषन दोउ॥ २९१॥

"Listen, O crest-jewel of kings: there is no one so blessed as you, who have for your sons Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, the two ornaments of the universe. (291)

चौ०—पूछन जोगु न तनय तुम्हारे। पुरुषसिंघ तिहु पुर उजिआरे॥
जिन्ह के जस प्रताप कें आगे। ससि मलीन रबि सीतल लागे॥ १॥
तिन्ह कहँ कहिअ नाथ किमि चीन्हे। देखिअ रबि कि दीप कर लीन्हे॥
सीय स्वयंबर भूप अनेका। समिटे सुभट एक तें एका॥ २॥
संभु सरासनु काहुँ न टारा। हारे सकल बीर बरिआरा॥
तीनि लोक महँ जे भटमानी। सभ कै सकति संभु धनु भानी॥ ३॥
सकइ उठाइ सरासुर मेरू। सोउ हियँ हारि गयउ करि फेरू॥
जेहिं कौतुक सिवसैलु उठावा। सोउ तेहि सभाँ पराभउ पावा॥ ४॥

"No enquiry is needed in respect of your sons, who are lions among men and the light of the universe, and before whose renown and glory the moon looks dim and the sun appears cool. About them, my lord, you ask how they came to be recognized ! Does one take a lamp in one's hand to see the sun ? On the occasion of Sītā's self-election of her husband had assembled numerous princes, each one of whom was a greater champion than the rest; but not one of them could stir Śambhu's bow and all the mighty

heroes failed. The might of all those who were proud of their valour in the three worlds was crushed by it. Even the demon Bāṇa, who could lift Mount Meru, lost heart and retired after pacing round the bow; and even he (Rāvaṇa) who had lifted up Mount Kailāsa (the abode of Śiva) in mere sport was worsted in that assembly.

(1–4)

दो०—तहाँ राम रघुबंस मनि सुनिअ महा महिपाल ।
भंजेउ चाप प्रयास बिनु जिमि गज पंकज नाल ॥ २९२ ॥

"On that occasion, we submit, O great king, Śrī Rāma, the jewel of Raghu's race, snapped the bow without the least exertion even as an elephant would break the stalk of a lotus.

(292)

चौ०—सुनि सरोष भृगुनायकु आए । बहुत भाँति तिन्ह आँखि देखाए ॥
देखि राम बलु निज धनु दीन्हा । करि बहु बिनय गवनु बन कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
राजन रामु अतुलबल जैसें । तेज निधान लखनु पुनि तैसें ॥
कंपहिं भूप बिलोकत जाकें । जिमि गज हरि किसोर के ताकें ॥ २ ॥
देव देखि तव बालक दोऊ । अब न आँखि तर आवत कोऊ ॥
दूत बचन रचना प्रिय लागी । प्रेम प्रताप बीर रस पागी ॥ ३ ॥
सभा समेत राउ अनुरागे । दूतन्ह देन निछावरि लागे ॥
कहि अनीति ते मूदहिं काना । धरमु बिचारि सबहिं सुखु माना ॥ ४ ॥

"Hearing the news the chief of Bhṛgus came in a fury and indulged in much brow-beating. But seeing Śrī Rāma's strength he handed his bow to the latter and after much supplication withdrew to the woods. Even as Rāma, O king, is unequalled in strength, Lakṣmaṇa too is a mine of glory, at whose very sight the kings trembled as elephants at the gaze of a young lion. Now that we have seen your two sons, my lord, no one catches our eye any longer." The messengers' eloquent speech, which was full of love, glorifying and expressive of the heroic sentiment, attracted all. The king and his whole court were overwhelmed with emotion and began to offer lavish gifts to the messengers. They, however, closed their ears in protest crying, "This is unfair!" Everyone was delighted to note their sense of propriety.*

(1–4)

दो०—तब उठि भूप बसिष्ठ कहुँ दीन्हि पत्रिका जाइ ।
कथा सुनाई गुरहि सब सादर दूत बोलाइ ॥ २९३ ॥

* In India not only the blood relations but even servants and co-villagers of a bride consider it sinful to accept even food or water, much less any gift or present, from the house of the bride-groom; for it is customary in this country to give the hand of a girl as a sacred gift and one is naturally reluctant to accept anything in return from him on whom a gift is made. This kind of sentiment prevails even in those cases where a marriage alliance has only been stipulated and not yet brought into actual effect. The messengers, in the above context, are actuated with a similar sentiment in refusing the gifts offered to them by King Daśaratha, who happened to be the father of the champion who had won the hand of Princess Jānakī, their master's daughter.

The king then rose and going up to Vasiṣṭha gave the letter to him, and sending for the messengers with due courtesy related the whole story to his preceptor. (293)

चौ०—सुनि बोले गुर अति सुखु पाई। पुन्य पुरुष कहुँ महि सुख छाई॥
जिमि सरिता सागर महुँ जाहीं। जद्यपि ताहि कामना नाहीं॥ १॥
तिमि सुख संपति बिनहिं बोलाएँ। धरमसील पहिं जाहिं सुभाएँ॥
तुम्ह गुर बिप्र धेनु सुर सेबी। तसि पुनीत कौसल्या देबी॥ २॥
सुकृती तुम्ह समान जग माहीं। भयउ न है कोउ होनेउ नाहीं॥
तुम्ह ते अधिक पुन्य बड़ काकें। राजन राम सरिस सुत जाकें॥ ३॥
बीर बिनीत धरम ब्रत धारी। गुन सागर बर बालक चारी॥
तुम्ह कहुँ सर्ब काल कल्याना। सजहु बरात बजाइ निसाना॥ ४॥

The Guru was highly pleased to hear the news and said, "To a virtuous man the world abounds in happiness. As rivers run into the sea, although the latter has no craving for them, so joy and prosperity come unasked and of their own accord to a pious soul. Just as you are given to the service of your preceptor, the Brahmans and cows as well as of gods, Queen Kausalyā is no less devout than you. A pious soul like you there has never been, nor is, nor shall be in this world. Who can be more blessed than you, O king, who have a son like Rāma, and whose four worthy children are all valiant, submissive, true to their vow of piety and oceans of goodness. You are blessed indeed for all time; therefore, prepare the marriage procession to the sound of kettledrums. (1—4)

दो०—चलहु बेगि सुनि गुर बचन भलेहिं नाथ सिरु नाइ।
भूपति गवने भवन तब दूतन्ह बासु देवाइ॥ २९४॥

"And proceed quickly." On hearing these words of the preceptor the king bowed his head and said, "Very well, my lord!" and after assigning lodgings to the messengers returned to his palace. (294)

चौ०—राजा सबु रनिवास बोलाई। जनक पत्रिका बाचि सुनाई॥
सुनि संदेसु सकल हरषानीं। अपर कथा सब भूप बखानीं॥ १॥
प्रेम प्रफुल्लित राजहिं रानी। मनहुँ सिखिनि सुनि बारिद बानी॥
मुदित असीस देहिं गुर नारीं। अति आनंद मगन महतारीं॥ २॥
लेहिं परस्पर अति प्रिय पाती। हृदयँ लगाइ जुड़ावहिं छाती॥
राम लखन कै कीरति करनी। बारहिं बार भूपबर बरनी॥ ३॥
मुनि प्रसादु कहि द्वार सिधाए। रानिन्ह तब महिदेव बोलाए॥
दिए दान आनंद समेता। चले बिप्रबर आसिष देता॥ ४॥

The king then called all the ladies of the gynaeceum and read aloud Janaka's letter to them. All rejoiced to hear the message and the king himself related the other tidings (which he had heard from the lips of the messengers). Bursting with emotion the queens shone like pea-hens rejoicing at

the rumbling of clouds. The preceptor's wife and the wives of other elders in their joy invoked the blessings of heaven and the mothers of the four brothers were overwhelmed with ecstasy. They took the most beloved letter from each other and pressing it to their bosom cooled their burning heart. The great king recounted again and again the glory and exploits of both Rāma and Laksmana. Saying that it was all due to the sage's grace he went out of doors. The queens then sent for the Brahmans and joyfully bestowed gifts on them. And the Brahmans returned to their home uttering blessings.

(1–4)

सो०—जाचक लिए हँकारि दीन्हि निछावरि कोटि बिधि ।
चिरु जीवहुँ सुत चारि चक्रबर्ति दसरत्थ के ॥ २९५ ॥

Next they called the beggars and lavished innumerable kinds of gifts on them. "Long live the four sons of Emperor Daśaratha !"

(295)

चौ०—कहत चले पहिरें पट नाना । हरषि हने गहगहे निसाना ॥
समाचार सब लोगन्ह पाए । लागे घर घर होन बधाए ॥ १ ॥
भुवन चारि दस भरा उछाहू । जनकसुता रघुबीर बिआहू ॥
सुनि सुभ कथा लोग अनुरागे । मग गृह गलीं सँवारन लागे ॥ २ ॥
जद्यपि अवध सदैव सुहावनि । राम पुरी मंगलमय पावनि ॥
तदपि प्रीति कै प्रीति सुहाई । मंगल रचना रची बनाई ॥ ३ ॥
ध्वज पताक पट चामर चारू । छावा परम बिचित्र बजारू ॥
कनक कलस तोरन मनि जाला । हरद दूब दधि अच्छत माला ॥ ४ ॥

Thus they shouted as they left, attired in raiment of various kinds; there was a jubilant and tempestuous clash of kettledrums When the news spread among all the people, festivities were started in every house. All the fourteen spheres were filled with joy at the news of the forthcoming wedding of Janaka's daughter with the hero of Raghu's race. The citizens were enraptured to hear the glad tidings and began to decorate the streets, houses and lanes Although the city of Ayodhyā is ever charming, being the blessed and sacred abode of Śrī Rāma, it was adorned with beautiful festal decorations because of the love the people bore towards the very embodiment of love. Flags and banners, curtains and graceful chowries canopied the bazars in a most marvellous fashion. With vases of gold, festal arches, festoons of netted gems, turmeric, blades of Dūrvā grass, curds, unbroken rice and wreaths of flowers—

(1–4)

दो०—मंगलमय निज निज भवन लोगन्ह रचे बनाइ ।
बीथीं सींचीं चतुरसम चौकें चारु पुराइ ॥ २९६ ॥

—The people decorated their respective houses, which were already full of blessings; the lanes were sprinkled over with water mixed with the fourfold pastes of sandal, saffron, musk and camphor and the squares in front of their houses were filled in with tasteful designs.

(296)

चौ०—जहँ तहँ जूथ जूथ मिलि भामिनि । सजि नव सप्त सकल दुति दामिनि ॥
बिधुबदनीं मृग सावक लोचनिं । निज सरूप रति मानु बिमोचनि ॥ १ ॥
गावहिं मंगल मंजुल बानीं । सुनि कल रव कलकंठि लजानीं ॥
भूप भवन किमि जाइ बखाना । बिस्व बिमोहन रचेउ बिताना ॥ २ ॥
मंगल द्रब्य मनोहर नाना । राजत बाजत बिपुल निसाना ॥
कतहुँ बिरिद बंदी उच्चरहीं । कतहुँ बेद धुनि भूसुर करहीं ॥ ३ ॥
गावहिं सुंदरि मंगल गीता । लै लै नामु रामु अरु सीता ॥
बहुत उछाहु भवनु अति थोरा । मानहुँ उमगि चला चहु ओरा ॥ ४ ॥

Collected here and there troops of ladies, all brilliant as the lightning, with moon-like face and eyes resembling those of a fawn and beauty enough to rob Love's consort (Rati) of her pride, and who had practised all the sixteen kinds of female adornment,* sang auspicious strains with voice so melodious that the female cuckoo was put to shame on hearing the sweet sound! How is the king's palace to be described; the pavilion set up there would dazzle the whole universe. Various articles of good omen and charming in appearance were displayed and a number of kettledrums were sounded. Here were panegyrists singing the family glory and here were Brahmans chanting the Vedas; while pretty women carolled festive songs, many times repeating the names of Rāma and Sītā. There was an excess of joy all round, while the palace was too small to contain it; it seemed, therefore, as if it overflowed on all sides. (1–4)

दो०—सोभा दसरथ भवन कइ को कबि बरनै पार ।
जहाँ सकल सुर सीस मनि राम लीन्ह अवतार ॥ २९७ ॥

What poet can describe the splendour of Daśaratha's palace, in which Rāma, the crest-jewel of all divinities had taken birth ? (297)

चौ०—भूप भरत पुनि लिए बोलाई । हय गय स्यंदन साजहु जाई ॥
चलहु बेगि रघुबीर बराता । सुनत पुलक पूरे दोउ भ्राता ॥ १ ॥
भरत सकल साहनी बोलाए । आयसु दीन्ह मुदित उठि धाए ॥
रचि रुचि जीन तुरग तिन्ह साजे । बरन बरन बर बाजि बिराजे ॥ २ ॥

* According to the standard works on poetics the sixteen forms of female adornment are as follows:—(1) rubbing and cleansing the body with fragrant unguents, (2) ablution, (3) putting on a new attire, (4) dyeing the sides of one's feet with red lac, (5) dressing the hair, (6) adorning the parting line of the hair with red lead, (7) painting the forehead with streaks of sandal-paste, (8) dotting the chin with a small black spot, (9) colouring the palms of one's hands and the soles of one's feet with the reddish dye extracted from the leaves of the Menhdi plant, (10) anointing one's body with perfumed unguents, (11) adorning the body with bejewelled ornaments, (12) beautifying the hair etc., with wreaths of flowers, (13) perfuming and dyeing one's mouth by chewing betel-leaves etc., (14) colouring the teeth, (15) painting the lips red and (16) applying collyrium to one's eyes

सुभग सकल सुठि चंचल करनी । अय इव जरत धरत पग धरनी ॥
नाना जाति न जाहिं बखाने । निदरि पवनु जनु चहत उड़ाने ॥ ३ ॥
तिन्ह सब छयल भए असवारा । भरत सरिस बय राजकुमारा ॥
सब सुंदर सब भूषनधारी । कर सर चाप तून कटि भारी ॥ ४ ॥

The king next called Bharata and said, "Go and prepare the horses, elephants and chariots and start at once in procession for Rāma's marriage." The two brothers were thrilled to hear this command. Bharata sent for the officers in charge of the stables and issued necessary instructions; the latter rose in joy and hastened to execute the orders. They equipped the horses with gorgeous saddles; gallant steeds of different colours stood there in their majesty. They were all beautiful and surpassingly swift-footed; they trod the ground as lightly as though it were red-hot iron. They belonged to different breeds, which were more than one could tell; they would fly in the air, as it were, outstripping the wind itself. Gallant princes, who were of the same age as Bharata, mounted them. The princes were all handsome and adorned with jewels and had a bow and arrow in their hands and a well-equipped quiver fastened at their side. (1—4)

दो०—छरे छबीले छयल सब सूर सुजान नबीन ।
जुग पदचर असवार प्रति जे असिकला प्रबीन ॥ २९८ ॥

They were elegant and blithesome youths, chosen and skilled warriors all; and with each knight were two footmen, clever at sword-play. (298)

चौ०—बाँधें बिरद बीर रन गाढ़े । निकसि भए पुर बाहेर ठाढ़े ॥
फेरहिं चतुर तुरग गति नाना । हरषहिं सुनि सुनि पनव निसाना ॥ १ ॥
रथ सारथिन्ह बिचित्र बनाए । ध्वज पताक मनि भूषन लाए ॥
चवँर चारु किंकिनि धुनि करहीं । भानु जान सोभा अपहरहीं ॥ २ ॥
सावँकरन अगनित हय होते । ते तिन्ह रथन्ह सारथिन्ह जोते ॥
सुंदर सकल अलंकृत सोहे । जिन्हहि बिलोकत मुनि मन मोहे ॥ ३ ॥
जे जल चलहिं थलहि की नाईं । टाप न बूड़ बेग अधिकाईं ॥
अस्त्र सस्त्र सबु साजु बनाई । रथी सारथिन्ह लिए बोलाई ॥ ४ ॥

The champions, who were all staunch in fight and had taken a vow of chivalry, sallied forth and halted outside the city. The clever fellows put their steeds through various paces and rejoiced to hear the clash of tabor and drum. The charioteers had made their cars equally gorgeous with flags and banners, gems and ornaments. They were also provided with elegant chowries and tinkling bells and outdid in splendour the chariot of the sun-god. The king owned numberless horses with dark ears,* which the charioteers yoked to their chariots. They were all beautiful and looked so charming with their ornaments that even sages would be enraptured at the sight. They skimmed the surface of water even as dry land and would not sink even hoof-deep: so marvellous was their speed. Having provided the chariots with missiles and weapons and every other equipment the charioteers called their masters. (1—4)

* A rare and invaluable breed of horses, milk white all over and dark only in the ears, which were considered specially suitable for a horse-sacrifice.

दो०—चढ़ि चढ़ि रथ बाहेर नगर लागी जुरन बरात ।
होत सगुन सुंदर सबहि जो जेहि कारज जात ॥ २९९ ॥

Mounting the chariots the processionists began to collect outside the city. On whatever errand one went, each was greeted by auspicious omens. (299)

चौ०—कलित करिबरन्हि परीं अँबारीं । कहि न जाहिं जेहि भाँति सँवारीं ॥
चले मत्त गज घंट बिराजी । मनहुँ सुभग सावन घन राजी ॥ १ ॥
बाहन अपर अनेक बिधाना । सिबिका सुभग सुखासन जाना ॥
तिन्ह चढ़ि चले बिप्रबर बृंदा । जनु तनु धरें सकल श्रुति छंदा ॥ २ ॥
मागध सूत बंदि गुनगायक । चले जान चढ़ि जो जेहि लायक ॥
बेसर ऊँट बृषभ बहु जाती । चले बस्तु भरि अगनित भाँती ॥ ३ ॥
कोटिन्ह काँवरि चले कहारा । बिबिध बस्तु को बरनै पारा ॥
चले सकल सेवक समुदाई । निज निज साजु समाजु बनाई ॥ ४ ॥

On magnificent elephants were mounted splendid seats with canopies wrought in a manner beyond all description. Elephants in rut, adorned with clanging bells, headed like beautiful (rumbling) clouds in the rainy month of Śrāvana (roughly corresponding to August). There were various kinds of other vehicles, such as charming palanquins, sedans etc., on which rode companies of noble Brahmans, incarnations, as it were, of all the hymns of the Vedas. Genealogists, bards, panegyrists and rhapsodists too rode on vehicles appropriate to their respective rank; while mules, camels and oxen of various breeds carried on their backs commodities of innumerable kinds. Millions of porters marched with burdens slung across their shoulders; who could enumerate the varieties of goods they carried ? Crowds of servants also proceeded on the journey equipping themselves in their own way and forming batches of their own. (1—4)

दो०—सब कें उर निर्भर हरषु पूरित पुलक सरीर ।
कबहिं देखिबे नयन भरि रामु लखनु दोउ बीर ॥ ३०० ॥

Each had boundless joy in his heart and a thrill ran through the bodies of all. They whispered to one another, "When shall we feast our eyes on the two heroes, Rāma and Laksmana ?" (300)

चौ०—गरजहिं गज घंटा धुनि घोरा । रथ रव बाजि हिंस चहु ओरा ॥
निदरि घनहि घुर्म्मरहिं निसाना । निज पराइ कछु सुनिअ न काना ॥ १ ॥
महा भीर भूपति के द्वारें । रज होइ जाइ पषान पबारें ॥
चढ़ी अटारिन्ह देखहिं नारीं । लिएँ आरती मंगल थारीं ॥ २ ॥
गावहिं गीत मनोहर नाना । अति आनंदु न जाइ बखाना ॥
तब सुमंत्र दुइ स्यंदन साजी । जोतें रबि हय निंदक बाजी ॥ ३ ॥
दोउ रथ रुचिर भूप पहिं आने । नहिं सारद पहिं जाहिं बखाने ॥
राज समाजु एक रथ साजा । दूसर तेज पुंज अति भ्राजा ॥ ४ ॥

The elephants trumpeted and their bells clanged with a terrific din; on all sides there was a creaking of wheels and a neighing of horses. The clash of kettledrums would drown the peal of thunder; no one could hear one's own words, much less of others. At the entrance of the king's palace, there was such an enormous crowd that a stone thrown there would be trodden into dust. Women viewed the sight from house-tops, carrying festal lights in salvers used on auspicious occasions, and carolled melodious strains of various kinds in an ecstasy of joy beyond description. Then Sumantra (King Daśaratha's own charioteer and trusted counsellor) got ready a pair of chariots and yoked them with steeds that would outrun even the horses of the sun-god, and brought them in all their splendour before the king; their beauty was more than goddess Śāradā could describe. One of them was equipped with the royal paraphernalia; while the other was a mass of splendour and shone brightly.

(1—4)

दो०—तेहिं रथ रुचिर बसिष्ठ कहुँ हरषि चढ़ाइ नरेसु ।
आपु चढ़ेउ स्यंदन सुमिरि हर गुर गौरि गनेसु ॥ ३०१ ॥

This magnificent chariot the king joyfully caused Vasiṣṭha to mount, and then himself ascended the other, with his thoughts fixed on Lord Hara, his preceptor (Vasiṣṭha), goddess Gaurī and the god Gaṇeśa. (301)

चौ०—सहित बसिष्ठ सोह नृप कैसें । सुर गुर संग पुरंदर जैसें ॥
करि कुल रीति बेद बिधि राऊ । देखि सबहि सब भाँति बनाऊ ॥ १ ॥
सुमिरि रामु गुर आयसु पाई । चले महीपति संख बजाई ॥
हरषे बिबुध बिलोकि बराता । बरषहिं सुमन सुमंगल दाता ॥ २ ॥
भयउ कोलाहल हय गय गाजे । ब्योम बरात बाजने बाजे ॥
सुर नर नारि सुमंगल गाईं । सरस राग बाजहिं सहनाईं ॥ ३ ॥
घंट घंटि धुनि बरनि न जाहीं । सरव करहिं पाइक फहराहीं ॥
करहिं बिदूषक कौतुक नाना । हास कुसल कल गान सुजाना ॥ ४ ॥

In the company of Vasiṣṭha the king shone forth as Indra (the lord of celestials) by the side of his preceptor (Bṛhaspati). After performing all the rites sanctioned by family usage or prescribed by the Vedas and seeing everyone fully equipped for the journey, he sallied forth to the blast of the conch-shell after receiving the permission of his preceptor and with his thoughts fixed on Śrī Rāma. The immortals rejoiced to see the marriage procession and rained down flowers full of auspicious blessings. There was a confused din of horses neighing, elephants trumpeting and music playing both in the heavens and in the procession. Human and celestial dames alike sang festal melodies, while clarionets played in sweet accord. There was an indescribable clamour of bells, both large and small. The footmen leaped and danced, displaying exercises of various kinds. Jesters, proficient in pleasantry and expert in singing melodious songs, practised all kinds of buffoonery.

(1—4)

दो०—तुरग नचावहिं कुअँर बर अकनि मृदंग निसान ।
नागर नट चितवहिं चकित डगहिं न ताल बँधान ॥ ३०२ ॥

Gallant princes made their steeds curvet to the measured beat of tabors and kettledrums; accomplished dancers noted with surprise that they never made a step out of time. (302)

चौ०—बनइ न बरनत बनी बराता । होहिं सगुन सुंदर सुभदाता ॥
चारा चाषु बाम दिसि लेई । मनहुँ सकल मंगल कहि देई ॥ १ ॥
दाहिन काग सुखेत सुहावा । नकुल दरसु सब काहूँ पावा ॥
सानुकूल बह त्रिबिध बयारी । सघट सबाल आव बर नारी ॥ २ ॥
लोवा फिरि फिरि दरसु देखावा । सुरभी सनमुख सिसुहि पिआवा ॥
मृगमाला फिरि दाहिनि आई । मंगल गन जनु दीन्हि देखाई ॥ ३ ॥
छेमकरी कह छेम बिसेषी । स्यामा बाम सुतरु पर देखी ॥
सनमुख आयउ दधि अरु मीना । कर पुस्तक दुइ बिप्र प्रबीना ॥ ४ ॥

The splendour of the marriage procession was more than one could describe. Fair and auspicious omens occurred. The blue-necked jay picked up food on the left and announced as it were all good fortune. On a fair field in the right appeared a crow, and a mongoose was seen by all. A soft, cool and fragrant breeze was blowing in a favourable direction; a blessed (unwidowed) woman appeared with a pitcher and a child in her arms. A fox turned round and showed himself again and again and a cow suckled its calf in front of the procession; a herd of deer came round to the right, as if good omens appeared in visible form. A Brahmani-kite promised great blessings; and a Śyāmā bird was observed on an auspicious tree to the left. A man bearing curds and fish and two learned Brahmans each with a book in his hand came from the opposite direction. (1—4)

दो०—मंगलमय कल्यानमय अभिमत फल दातार ।
जनु सब साचे होन हित भए सगुन एक बार ॥ ३०३ ॥

All kinds of blessed and auspicious omens and those conducive of desired results occurred all at once as if to fulfil themselves. (303)

चौ०—मंगल सगुन सुगम सब ताकें । सगुन ब्रह्म सुंदर सुत जाकें ॥
राम सरिस बरु दुलहिनि सीता । समधी दसरथु जनकु पुनीता ॥ १ ॥
सुनि अस ब्याहु सगुन सब नाचे । अब कीन्हे बिरंचि हम साँचे ॥
एहि बिधि कीन्ह बरात पयाना । हय गय गाजहिं हने निसाना ॥ २ ॥
आवत जानि भानुकुल केतू । सरितन्हि जनक बँधाए सेतू ॥
बीच बीच बर बास बनाए । सुरपुर सरिस संपदा छाए ॥ ३ ॥
असन सयन बर बसन सुहाए । पावहिं सब निज निज मन भाए ॥
नित नूतन सुख लखि अनुकूले । सकल बरातिन्ह मंदिर भूले ॥ ४ ॥

Auspicious omens easily occur to him who has God with form as his own son. In the marriage which was going to take place, the bridegroom was no other than Śrī Rāma and Sītā Herself was the bride; while the pious Daśaratha

and Janaka were the parents of the bridegroom and the bride respectively; hearing of this marriage all good omens danced and said, "It is now that the Creator has justified us." In this way the procession set forth amidst the neighing of horses, the trumpeting of elephants and the clash of kettledrums. Learning that the chief of the solar race, King Daśaratha, was already on the way, King Janaka had the rivers bridged, and got beautiful rest-houses erected at different stages, which vied in magnificence with the city of immortals (Amarāvatī), and in which members of the bridegroom's party were supplied with excellent food, beds and clothing each according to his own taste. Finding ever new pleasures agreeable to themselves all the members of the bridegroom's party forgot their own home. (1—4)

दो०—आवत जानि बरात बर सुनि गहगहे निसान।
सजि गज रथ पदचर तुरग लेन चले अगवान ॥ ३०४ ॥

When it was learnt that the procession of the bridegroom's party was approaching and the tempestuous clash of the kettledrums was heard, a deputation went out to receive it with elephants, chariots, footmen and horses duly equipped. (304)

[PAUSE 10 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—कनक कलस भरि कोपर थारा। भाजन ललित अनेक प्रकारा ॥
भरे सुधासम सब पकवाने। नाना भाँति न जाहिं बखाने ॥ १ ॥
फल अनेक बर बस्तु सुहाईं। हरषि भेंट हित भूप पठाईं ॥
भूषन बसन महामनि नाना। खग मृग हय गय बहुबिधि जाना ॥ २ ॥
मंगल सगुन सुगंध सुहाए। बहुत भाँति महिपाल पठाए ॥
दधि चिउरा उपहार अपारा। भरि भरि काँवरि चले कहारा ॥ ३ ॥
अगवानन्ह जब दीखि बराता। उर आनंदु पुलक भर गाता ॥
देखि बनाव सहित अगवाना। मुदित बरातिन्ह हने निसाना ॥ ४ ॥

Jars of gold full of sweet and cold drinks and trays and salvers and beautiful dishes of various kinds laden with confections of indescribable variety and delicious as ambrosia, with luscious fruit and many other delightful articles were sent as an offering by King Janaka in his joy. The king also sent ornaments, wearing apparel, valuable gems of every variety, birds, antelopes, horses, elephants, vehicles of every description, charming aromatic substances of an auspicious nature and various articles of good omen; and a train of porters marched with their loads of curds, parched rice and presents of endless variety slung across their shoulders. When the deputation saw the bridegroom's party, their mind was filled with rapture and a thrill ran through their frame. Seeing the deputation equipped in every way the members of the bridegroom's party had their drums beaten in great joy. (1—4)

दो०—हरषि परसपर मिलन हित कछुक चले बगमेल।
जनु आनंद समुद्र दुइ मिलत बिहाइ सुबेल ॥ ३०५ ॥

A batch from each side joyfully marched at a gallop in order to meet each other and the two parties met as two oceans of bliss that had transgressed their bounds. (305)

चौ०—बरषि सुमन सुर सुंदरि गावहिं। मुदित देव दुंदुभीं बजावहिं॥
बस्तु सकल राखीं नृप आगें। बिनय कीन्हि तिन्ह अति अनुरागें॥ १॥
प्रेम समेत रायँ सबु लीन्हा। भै बकसीस जाचकन्हि दीन्हा॥
करि पूजा मान्यता बड़ाई। जनवासे कहुँ चले लवाई॥ २॥
बसन बिचित्र पाँवड़े परहीं। देखि धनदु धन मदु परिहरहीं॥
अति सुंदर दीन्हेउ जनवासा। जहँ सब कहुँ सब भाँति सुपासा॥ ३॥
जानी सियँ बरात पुर आई। कछु निज महिमा प्रगटि जनाई॥
हृदयँ सुमिरि सब सिद्धि बोलाईं। भूप पहुनई करन पठाईं॥ ४॥

Celestial damsels rained down flowers and sang, while the glad gods sounded kettledrums. The members of the deputation placed all the offerings before King Daśaratha and supplicated him with an affectionate address. The king lovingly accepted everything and distributed the offerings as presents among his own people, or bestowed them as alms on the beggars. After due homage, reverence and courtesy the deputation conducted the bridegroom's party to the lodgings set apart for them. Gorgeous cloths were spread as carpets for the royal guests to tread upon, on seeing which Kuvera (the god of wealth) was no longer proud of his wealth. Magnificent were the quarters assigned to the bridegroom's party, which provided every kind of comfort for each guest. When Sītā learnt that the bridegroom's party had arrived in the city, She manifested Her glory to a certain extent. By Her very thought She summoned all the Siddhis (miraculous powers personified) and despatched them to wait upon the king and his party. (1—4)

दो०—सिधि सब सिय आयसु अकनि गईं जहाँ जनवास।
लिएँ संपदा सकल सुख सुरपुर भोग बिलास॥ ३०६॥

Hearing Sītā's command they repaired to the guests' apartments, taking with them every kind of riches, comforts as well as the enjoyments and luxuries of heaven. (306)

चौ०—निज निज बास बिलोकि बराती। सुरसुख सकल सुलभ सब भाँती॥
बिभव भेद कछु कोउ न जाना। सकल जनक कर करहिं बखाना॥ १॥
सिय महिमा रघुनायक जानी। हरषे हृदयँ हेतु पहिचानी॥
पितु आगमनु सुनत दोउ भाई। हृदयँ न अति आनंदु अमाई॥ २॥
सकुचन्ह कहि न सकत गुरु पाहीं। पितु दरसन लालचु मन माहीं॥
बिस्वामित्र बिनय बड़ि देखी। उपजा उर संतोषु बिसेषी॥ ३॥
हरषि बंधु दोउ हृदयँ लगाए। पुलक अंग अंबक जल छाए॥
चले जहाँ दसरथु जनवासे। मनहुँ सरोबर तकेउ पिआसे॥ ४॥

Each member of the bridegroom's party found in his own apartment all the enjoyments of heaven ready at hand in every way. No one, however, had an inkling of the mystery behind this untold splendour; everyone sang Janaka's praises. Rāma alone recognized Sītā's influence and was glad at heart to discern Her love. When the two brothers heard of their father's arrival, they could not contain themselves for joy, but were too modest to speak to their Guru, though their heart longed to see their sire. Viśwāmitra felt much gratified at heart to perceive this great humility. In his joy he pressed the two brothers to his bosom; a thrill ran through his limbs, while tears rushed to his eyes. They proceeded to the guests' apartments, where King Daśaratha was, as though a lake sought to visit a thirsty soul. (1—4)

दो०—भूप बिलोके जबहिं मुनि आवत सुतन्ह समेत ।
उठे हरषि सुखसिंधु महुँ चले थाह सी लेत ॥ ३०७ ॥

When the king saw the sage coming with the two princes, he rose in joy and advanced to meet them like a man who feels his footing in an ocean of bliss. (307)

चौ०—मुनिहि दंडवत कीन्ह महीसा । बार बार पद रज धरि सीसा ॥
कौसिक राउ लिए उर लाई । कहि असीस पूछी कुसलाई ॥ १ ॥
पुनि दंडवत करत दोउ भाई । देखि नृपति उर सुखु न समाई ॥
सुत हियँ लाइ दुसह दुख मेटे । मृतक सरीर प्रान जनु भेंटे ॥ २ ॥
पुनि बसिष्ट पद सिर तिन्ह नाए । प्रेम मुदित मुनिबर उर लाए ॥
बिप्र बृंद बंदे दुहुँ भाईं । मनभावती असीसें पाईं ॥ ३ ॥
भरत सहानुज कीन्ह प्रनामा । लिए उठाइ लाइ उर रामा ॥
हरषे लखन देखि दोउ भ्राता । मिले प्रेम परिपूरित गाता ॥ ४ ॥

The king prostrated himself before the sage, placing the dust of the latter's feet on his head again and again. Kauśika pressed the king to his bosom, blessed him and inquired after his welfare. When King Daśaratha saw the two brothers prostrating themselves he could not contain himself for joy. Pressing the boys to his bosom he allayed the unbearable pangs of separation and looked like a dead body restored to life. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa then bowed their head at Vasiṣṭha's feet and the great sage embraced them in the ecstasy of love. The two brothers next saluted all the Brahmans and in turn received their welcome blessings. Bharata and his younger half-brother (Śatrughna) greeted Rāma, who lifted them and embraced them. Lakṣmaṇa rejoiced to see the two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) and as he embraced them his limbs were throbbing with emotion. (1—4)

दो०—पुरजन परिजन जातिजन जाचक मंत्री मीत ।
मिले जथाबिधि सबहि प्रभु परम कृपाल बिनीत ॥ ३०८ ॥

The most gracious and unassuming Lord greeted everyone else including the citizens, attendants, kinsmen, beggars, ministers and friends in a manner befitting the rank of each. (308)

चौ०—रामहि देखि बरात जुड़ानी । प्रीति कि रीति न जाति बखानी ॥
नृप समीप सोहहिं सुत चारी । जनु धन धरमादिक तनुधारी ॥ १ ॥
सुतन्ह समेत दसरथहि देखी । मुदित नगर नर नारि बिसेषी ॥
सुमन बरिसि सुर हनहिं निसाना । नाकनटीं नाचहिं करि गाना ॥ २ ॥
सतानंद अरु बिप्र सचिव गन । मागध सूत बिदुष बंदीजन ॥
सहित बरात राउ सनमाना । आयसु मागि फिरे अगवाना ॥ ३ ॥
प्रथम बरात लगन तें आई । तातें पुर प्रमोदु अधिकाई ॥
ब्रह्मानंदु लोग सब लहहीं । बढ़हुँ दिवस निसि बिधि सन कहहीं ॥ ४ ॥

The sight of Śrī Rāma was so soothing to the guests; the ways of love are beyond description. Beside the king his four sons looked like incarnations as it were of the four ends of human endeavour, viz., riches, religious merit etc. The people of the city were delighted beyond measure to see King Daśaratha with his sons. The gods rained down flowers and beat their drums; the nymphs of heaven danced and sang. Śatānanda (King Janaka's family preceptor) and the other Brahmans and ministers of State, as well as the genealogists, minstrels, jesters and rhapsodists, who formed the deputation, paid due honour to the king and his party and returned with their permission. The bridegroom's party had arrived earlier than the day fixed for the wedding: there was great rejoicing in the city on this account. Everyone enjoyed transcendent bliss and prayed to the Creator that the days and nights might be lengthened. (1—4)

दो०—रामु सीय सोभा अवधि सुकृत अवधि दोउ राज ।
जहँ तहँ पुरजन कहहिं अस मिलि नर नारि समाज ॥ ३०९ ॥

"Rāma and Sītā are the perfection of beauty, and the two kings (Daśaratha and Janaka) the perfection of virtue!" Thus would observe the men and women of the city wherever they happened to meet. (309)

चौ०—जनक सुकृत मूरति बैदेही । दसरथ सुकृत रामु धरें देही ॥
इन्ह सम काहुँ न सिव अवराधे । काहुँ न इन्ह समान फल लाधे ॥ १ ॥
इन्ह सम कोउ न भयउ जग माहीं । है नहिं कतहूँ होनेउ नाहीं ॥
हम सब सकल सुकृत कै रासी । भए जग जनमि जनकपुर बासी ॥ २ ॥
जिन्ह जानकी राम छबि देखी । को सुकृती हम सरिस बिसेषी ॥
पुनि देखब रघुबीर बिआहू । लेब भली बिधि लोचन लाहू ॥ ३ ॥
कहहिं परसपर कोकिलबयनीं । एहि बिआहँ बड़ लाभु सुनयनीं ॥
बड़ें भाग बिधि बात बनाई । नयन अतिथि होइहहिं दोउ भाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Vaidehī (Sītā) is the incarnation of Janaka's merit, and Rāma is Daśaratha's virtue personified. No one has worshipped Śiva with such devotion as these two kings, nor has anyone obtained such a reward as they have. No one has equalled them in this world, nor is there anyone to equal them anywhere nor shall be. We are all storehouses of all kinds of merits

in that we have been born in this world as residents of Janaka's capital. Who is so highly blessed as we, who have beheld the beauty of Jānakī (Sītā) and Rāma ? And we will witness Śrī Rāma's wedding and shall thereby richly reap the benefit of our eyes. Damsels with voice as sweet as the notes of the cuckoo whispered to one another, "O bright-eyed friends, we shall gain much by this union. By our great good-luck Providence has ordained things well: the two brothers shall often delight our eyes. (1—4)

दो०—बारहिं बार सनेह बस जनक बोलाउब सीय ।
लेन आइहहिं बंधु दोउ कोटि काम कमनीय ॥ ३१० ॥

"Time after time out of affection Janaka will send for Sītā (from Ayodhyā); and the two brothers, charming as millions of Cupids put together, will come to take her back. (310)

चौ०—बिबिध भाँति होइहि पहुनाई । प्रिय न काहि अस सासुर माई ॥
तब तब राम लखनहि निहारी । होइहहिं सब पुर लोग सुखारी ॥ १ ॥
सखि जस राम लखन कर जोटा । तैसेइ भूप संग दुइ ढोटा ॥
स्याम गौर सब अंग सुहाए । ते सब कहहिं देखि जे आए ॥ २ ॥
कहा एक मैं आजु निहारे । जनु बिरंचि निज हाथ सँवारे ॥
भरतु रामही की अनुहारी । सहसा लखि न सकहिं नर नारी ॥ ३ ॥
लखनु सत्रुसूदनु एकरूपा । नख सिख ते सब अंग अनूपा ॥
मन भावहिं मुख बरनि न जाहीं । उपमा कहुँ त्रिभुवन कोउ नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"There will be hospitality of every kind, who, dear one, would not love to stay at such a father-in-law's. On each such occasion all the people of the city will be happy to behold Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. King Daśaratha, my friends, has brought with him two other lads exactly resembling the pair of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. One dark, the other fair, but both charming of every limb: so declare all those who have seen them." Said another, "I saw them today: it appeared to me as though the Creator had fashioned them with his own hands. Bharata is an exact copy of Rāma; no man or woman could distinguish them at first sight. Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrusūdana (Śatrughna) are indistinguishable from each other, peerless in every limb from head to foot. The four brothers attract the mind but cannot be described in words; for they have no match in all the three worlds. (1—4)

छं०—उपमा न कोउ कह दास तुलसी कतहुँ कबि कोबिद कहैं ।
बल बिनय बिद्या सील सोभा सिंधु इन्ह से एइ अहैं ॥
पुर नारि सकल पसारि अंचल बिधिहि बचन सुनावहीं ।
ब्याहिअहुँ चारिउ भाइ एहिं पुर हम सुमंगल गावहीं ॥

Says Tulasīdāsa: "They have no comparison anywhere, so declare the poets and wise men. Oceans of strength, modesty, learning, amiability and beauty, they are their own compeers." Spreading out the skirt of their garment (as a beggar

would while asking for alms) all the women of the city made entreaties to the Creator, "May all the four brothers be married in this city and may we sing charming nuptial songs!"

सो०—कहहिं परस्पर नारि बारि बिलोचन पुलक तन।
सखि सबु करब पुरारि पुन्य पयोनिधि भूप दोउ ॥ ३११ ॥

Said the damsels to one another, with tears in their eyes and the hair on their body standing erect, "Friends, the Slayer of the demon Tripura will accomplish everything: the two kings are of such boundless merit." (311)

चौ०—एहि बिधि सकल मनोरथ करहीं। आनँद उमगि उमगि उर भरहीं ॥
जे नृप सीय स्वयंबर आए। देखि बंधु सब तिन्ह सुख पाए ॥ १ ॥
कहत राम जसु बिसद बिसाला। निज निज भवन गए महिपाला ॥
गए बीति कछु दिन एहि भाँती। प्रमुदित पुरजन सकल बराती ॥ २ ॥
मंगल मूल लगन दिनु आवा। हिम रितु अगहनु मासु सुहावा ॥
ग्रह तिथि नखतु जोगु बर बारू। लगन सोधि बिधि कीन्ह बिचारू ॥ ३ ॥
पठै दीन्हि नारद सन सोई। गनी जनक के गनकन्ह जोई ॥
सुनी सकल लोगन्ह यह बाता। कहहिं जोतिषी आहिं बिधाता ॥ ४ ॥

In this way they all prayed and a flood of joy inundated their heart. The princes who had come as Sītā's suitors rejoiced to see the four brothers and returned each to his own home extolling Śrī Rāma's widespread and spotless fame. Thus a few days elapsed to the delight alike of the citizens and all the members of the bridegroom's party. At length the blessed day of wedding arrived; it was the delightful month of Mārgaśīrṣa and the beginning of the cold season. Having carefully examined and determined the propitious nature of the planets, date, asterism, the conjunction of the stars, the day of the week and the hour of the wedding the Creator despatched the note concerning the hour of the wedding through Nārada; it was just the same that Janaka's astrologers had already determined. When all the people heard of this, they observed, "The astrologers of this place are so many creators as it were." (1—4)

दो०—धेनुधूरि बेला बिमल सकल सुमंगल मूल।
बिप्रन्ह कहेउ बिदेह सन जानि सगुन अनुकूल ॥ ३१२ ॥

The most auspicious and sacred hour before sunset (which is the time when cows generally return home from pasture, and is consequently marked by clouds of dust raised by their hoofs) arrived; perceiving propitious omens, the Brahmans apprised King Videha of its approach. (312)

चौ०—उपरोहितहि कहेउ नरनाहा। अब बिलंब कर कारनु काहा ॥
सतानंद तब सचिव बोलाए। मंगल सकल साजि सब ल्याए ॥ १ ॥
संख निसान पनव बहु बाजे। मंगल कलस सगुन सुभ साजे ॥
सुभग सुआसिनि गावहिं गीता। करहिं बेद धुनि बिप्र पुनीता ॥ २ ॥

लेन चले सादर एहि भाँती । गए जहाँ जनवास बराती ॥
कोसलपति कर देखि समाजू । अति लघु लाग तिन्हहि सुरराजू ॥ ३ ॥
भयउ समउ अब धारिअ पाऊ । यह सुनि परा निसानहिं घाऊ ॥
गुरहि पूछि करि कुलबिधि राजा । चले संग मुनि साधु समाजा ॥ ४ ॥

The king asked the family priest (Śatānanda), "What is the cause of delay now?" Śatānanda then summoned the ministers, who came equipped with all auspicious articles. A number of conches, drums and tabors sounded. Festal vases and articles of good omen (such as curds, turmeric and blades of Dūrvā grass) were displayed. Graceful women (whose husbands were alive) sang songs, and holy Brahmans murmured Vedic texts. In this manner they proceeded to invite the bridegroom's party with due honour and called at the latter's lodgings. When they witnessed King Daśaratha's glory, Indra (the lord of celestials) looked very small to them. "The hour has come; be good enough to start now," they submitted. At this the drums gave a thundering beat. After consulting his preceptor and going through the family rites King Daśaratha sallied forth with a host of sages and holy men. (1—4)

दो०—भाग्य बिभव अवधेस कर देखि देव ब्रह्मादि ।
लगे सराहन सहस मुख जानि जनम निज बादि ॥ ३१३ ॥

Witnessing King Daśaratha's good fortune and glory and believing their birth as fruitless, Brahmā and the other gods began to extol him with a thousand tongues. (313)

चौ०—सुरन्ह सुमंगल अवसरु जाना । बरषहिं सुमन बजाइ निसाना ॥
सिव ब्रह्मादिक बिबुध बरूथा । चढ़े बिमानन्हि नाना जूथा ॥ १ ॥
प्रेम पुलक तन हृदयँ उछाहू । चले बिलोकन राम बिआहू ॥
देखि जनकपुरु सुर अनुरागे । निज निज लोक सबहिं लघु लागे ॥ २ ॥
चितवहिं चकित बिचित्र बिताना । रचना सकल अलौकिक नाना ॥
नगर नारि नर रूप निधाना । सुघर सुधरम सुसील सुजाना ॥ ३ ॥
तिन्हहि देखि सब सुर सुरनारीं । भए नखत जनु बिधु उजिआरीं ॥
बिधिहि भयउ आचरजु बिसेषी । निज करनी कछु कतहुँ न देखी ॥ ४ ॥

The gods perceived that it was a fit occasion for happy rejoicings; hence they rained down flowers and beat their drums. Śiva, Brahmā and hosts of other gods mounted aerial cars in several groups. Their frames thrilling over with emotion and their hearts overflowing with joy, they proceeded to witness Śrī Rāma's wedding. The gods felt so enraptured to see Janaka's capital that their own realms appeared to them as of small account. They gazed with amazement at the wonderful pavilion and all the different works of art which were of a transcendental character. The people of the city, both men and women, were so many mines of beauty, well-formed, pious, amiable and wise. In their presence all the gods and goddesses appeared like stars

in a moonlit night. The Creator (Brahmā) was astounded above all; for nowhere did he find his own handiwork. (1—4)

दो०—सिवँ समुझाए देव सब जनि आचरज भुलाहु।
हृदयँ बिचारहु धीर धरि सिय रघुबीर बिआहु ॥ ३१४ ॥

Śiva admonished all the gods saying, "Be not lost in wonder; calmly ponder in your heart that it is the wedding of Sītā and the Hero of Raghu's race. (314)

चौ०—जिन्ह कर नामु लेत जग माहीं। सकल अमंगल मूल नसाहीं ॥
करतल होहिं पदारथ चारी। तेइ सिय रामु कहेउ कामारी ॥ १ ॥
एहि बिधि संभु सुरन्ह समुझावा। पुनि आगें बर बसह चलावा ॥
देवन्ह देखे दसरथु जाता। महामोद मन पुलकित गाता ॥ २ ॥
साधु समाज संग महिदेवा। जनु तनु धरें करहिं सुख सेवा ॥
सोहत साथ सुभग सुत चारी। जनु अपबरग सकल तनुधारी ॥ ३ ॥
मरकत कनक बरन बर जोरी। देखि सुरन्ह भै प्रीति न थोरी ॥
पुनि रामहि बिलोकि हियँ हरषे। नृपहि सराहि सुमन तिन्ह बरषे ॥ ४ ॥

"At the very mention of whose name all evil is uprooted and the four ends of human existence are brought within one's grasp, such are Sītā and Rāma," said the Destroyer of Cupid, Śankara. In this way Śambhu admonished the divinities, and then spurred on His noble bull. The gods beheld Daśaratha marching (to Janaka's palace) with his heart full of rapture and the hair on his body standing erect. The assemblage of holy men and Brahmans accompanying the king appeared like joys incarnate ministering to him. By his side shone forth the four handsome princes, incarnations as it were of the four types of final beatitude.* The gods were greatly inspired with love to see the two lovely pairs, one possessing the hue of emeralds and the other of golden hue. They were particularly delighted at heart to see Rāma; and extolling the king they rained down flowers on him. (1—4)

दो०—राम रूपु नख सिख सुभग बारहिं बार निहारि।
पुलक गात लोचन सजल उमा समेत पुरारि ॥ ३१५ ॥

As Umā and the Slayer of the demon Tripura gazed again and again at Śrī Rāma's charming beauty from head to foot, the hair on Their body stood erect and Their eyes were bedewed with tears. (315)

चौ०—केकि कंठ दुति स्यामल अंगा। तड़ित बिनिंदक बसन सुरंगा ॥
ब्याह बिभूषन बिबिध बनाए। मंगल सब सब भाँति सुहाए ॥ १ ॥

* The four types of final beatitude as enumerated in the scriptures are as follows:—(1) Sālokya (residence in the same heaven as the Supreme Deity), (2) Sārūpya (attaining a form similar to that of the Deity), (3) Sāmīpya (living in close proximity with the Deity), and (4) Sāyujya (complete absorption into the Deity).

सरद बिमल बिधु बदनु सुहावन । नयन नवल राजीव लजावन ॥
सकल अलौकिक सुंदरताई । कहि न जाइ मनही मन भाई ॥ २ ॥
बंधु मनोहर सोहहिं संगा । जात नचावत चपल तुरंगा ॥
राजकुअँर बर बाजि देखावहिं । बंस प्रसंसक बिरिद सुनावहिं ॥ ३ ॥
जेहि तुरंग पर रामु बिराजे । गति बिलोकि खगनायकु लाजे ॥
कहि न जाइ सब भाँति सुहावा । बाजि बेषु जनु काम बनावा ॥ ४ ॥

His swarthy form possessed the glow of a peacock's neck, while His bright yellow raiment outshone the lightning. Wedding ornaments of every kind, all auspicious and graceful in every way, adorned His person. His countenance was as delightful as the moon in a cloudless autumnal night; while His eyes put to shame a blooming pair of lotuses. The elegance of His form was transcendent in all its details; though captivating the soul, it defied description. Beside Him shone forth His lovely brothers, who rode curveting their restive steed. The other princes too displayed the pace of their horses and the family bards recited the glories of their line. Even the king of birds, Garuḍa, blushed for shame to note the speed of the steed that Rāma bestrode; it was charming beyond description in every way; it seemed as though Cupid himself had taken the form of a horse.

(1—4)

छं०—जनु बाजि बेषु बनाइ मनसिजु राम हित अति सोहई ।
आपनें बय बल रूप गुन गति सकल भुवन बिमोहई ॥
जगमगत जीनु जराव जोति सुमोति मनि मानिक लगे ।
किंकिनि ललाम लगामु ललित बिलोकि सुर नर मुनि ठगे ॥

It seemed as if Cupid himself had appeared with all his charm in the disguise of a horse for the sake of Śrī Rāma and fascinated the whole universe with its youth and vigour, form and virtues as well as with its pace. A bejewelled saddle, thick set with beautiful pearls, gems and rubies shone on his back; the exquisite band with small tinkling bells and the lovely bridle, dazed gods, men and sages alike.

दो०—प्रभु मनसहिं लयलीन मनु चलत बाजि छबि पाव ।
भूषित उड़गन तड़ित घनु जनु बर बरहि नचाव ॥ ३१६ ॥

Marching with its mind completely merged in the Lord's will, the horse looked most beautiful, as though a cloud irradiated by stars and the fitful lightning had mounted a peacock and made it dance.

(316)

चौ०—जेहिं बर बाजि रामु असवारा । तेहि सारदउ न बरनै पारा ॥
संकरु राम रूप अनुरागे । नयन पंचदस अति प्रिय लागे ॥ १ ॥
हरि हित सहित रामु जब जोहे । रमा समेत रमापति मोहे ॥
निरखि राम छबि बिधि हरषाने । आठइ नयन जानि पछिताने ॥ २ ॥

सुर सेनप उर बहुत उछाहू । बिधि ते डेवढ़ लोचन लाहू ॥
रामहि चितव सुरेस सुजाना । गौतम श्रापु परम हित माना ॥ ३ ॥
देव सकल सुरपतिहि सिहाहीं । आजु पुरंदर सम कोउ नाहीं ॥
मुदित देवगन रामहि देखी । नृपसमाज दुहुँ हरषु बिसेषी ॥ ४ ॥

Even Śāradā is unable to describe the noble steed on which Śrī Rāma rode. Śankara (who has five faces, with three eyes each) was enamoured of Śrī Rāma's beauty and congratulated himself on His possessing as many as fifteen eyes. When Śrī Hari (Viṣṇu) fondly gazed on Rāma, both Ramā and Her lord were equally enchanted. (The four-faced) Brahmā too was delighted to behold Śrī Rāma's beauty; but he felt sorry to think that he had only eight eyes. The generalissimo of the heavenly host (the six-faced Kārtikeya) exulted over the fact of his possessing half as many eyes again as Brahmā. When the wise lord of celestials gazed on Śrī Rāma (with his thousand eyes), he thought Gotama's curse as the greatest blessing. All the gods envied Indra and observed, "No one can vie with Purandara (Indra) today." The whole host of heavenly beings rejoiced to behold Śrī Rāma and there was joy beyond measure in the court of both the monarchs. (1—4)

छं०—अति हरषु राजसमाज दुहु दिसि दुंदुभीं बाजहिं घनी ।
बरषहिं सुमन सुर हरषि कहि जय जयति जय रघुकुलमनी ॥
एहि भाँति जानि बरात आवत बाजने बहु बाजहीं ।
रानी सुआसिनि बोलि परिछनि हेतु मंगल साजहीं ॥

There was great rejoicing in the court of both the kings and a tempestuous clash of kettledrums on both sides; the gods rained down flowers, shouting in their joy, "Glory, glory, glory to the Jewel of Raghu's race !" In this way when it was known that the marriage procession was approaching, all sorts of music began to play ; while Queen Sunayanā (Sītā's mother) summoned married women whose husbands were alive and prepared with their help auspicious materials for the ceremony of waving lights round the bridegroom.

दो०—सजि आरती अनेक बिधि मंगल सकल सँवारि ।
चलीं मुदित परिछनि करन गजगामिनि बर नारि ॥ ३१७ ॥

Kindling lights of various kinds and collecting all other articles of good omen, a bevy of graceful women, who possessed the charming gait of an elephant, proceeded joyfully to perform the ceremony of waving lights round the bridegroom. (317)

चौ०—बिधुबदनीं सब सब मृगलोचनि । सब निज तन छबि रति मदु मोचनि ॥
पहिरें बरन बरन बर चीरा । सकल बिभूषन सजें सरीरा ॥ १ ॥
सकल सुमंगल अंग बनाएँ । करहिं गान कलकंठि लजाएँ ॥
कंकन किंकिनि नूपुर बाजहिं । चालि बिलोकि काम गज लाजहिं ॥ २ ॥

बाजहिं बाजने बिबिध प्रकारा । नभ अरु नगर सुमंगलचारा ॥
सची सारदा रमा भवानी । जे सुरतिय सुचि सहज सयानी ॥ ३ ॥
कपट नारि बर बेष बनाई । मिलीं सकल रनिवासहिं जाई ॥
करहिं गान कल मंगल बानीं । हरष बिबस सब काहुँ न जानीं ॥ ४ ॥

They all had moon-like faces, and eyes like those of a gazelle; by the elegance of their form they robbed Rati (Love's consort) of all self-conceit. Attired in costly garments of various colours they had adorned their person with all kinds of ornaments. They had further beautified all their limbs with auspicious materials, and sang melodies that put to shame even a female cuckoo. Bracelets, small bells round their waist-band as well as anklets made a jingling sound as they moved and even Love's elephants blushed for shame to see their gait. All kinds of music played and there were rejoicings both in the heavens and in the city. Śachī (Indra's consort), Śāradā, Ramā, Bhavānī and other goddesses, who were pure-hearted and clever by nature, assumed the disguise of lovely women and joined the royal gynaeceum. They sang festal songs in a melodious voice; and as every one was overcome with joy no one could recognize them.

(1–4)

छं०—को जान केहि आनंद बस सब ब्रह्मु बर परिछन चली ।
कल गान मधुर निसान बरषहिं सुमन सुर सोभा भली ॥
आनंदकंदु बिलोकि दूलहु सकल हियँ हरषित भई ।
अंभोज अंबक अंबु उमगि सुअंग पुलकावलि छई ॥

Who should recognize whom, when everyone in the gynaeceum proceeded in her ecstatic joy to join the ceremony of waving lights round the bridegroom, who was no other than the Supreme Spirit incarnate. Melodious songs were being sung and kettledrums gently sounded; the gods rained down flowers and everything looked most charming. All the women were delighted at heart to behold the bridegroom, who was the fountain of joy; tears of love rushed to their lotus-like eyes and the hair on their pretty limbs stood erect.

दो०—जो सुखु भा सिय मातु मन देखि राम बर बेषु ।
सो न सकहिं कहि कलप सत सहस सारदा सेषु ॥ ३१८ ॥

The joy which Sītā's mother felt in her heart on beholding Śrī Rāma in the attire of a bridegroom was more than a thousand Śāradās and Śeṣas could tell in a hundred Kalpas.

(318)

चौ०—नयन नीरु हटि मंगल जानी । परिछनि करहिं मुदित मन रानी ॥
बेद बिहित अरु कुल आचारू । कीन्ह भली बिधि सब ब्यवहारू ॥ १ ॥
पंच सबद धुनि मंगल गाना । पट पाँवड़े परहिं बिधि नाना ॥
करि आरती अरघु तिन्ह दीन्हा । राम गमनु मंडप तब कीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
दसरथु सहित समाज बिराजे । बिभव बिलोकि लोकपति लाजे ॥
समयँ समयँ सुर बरषहिं फूला । सांति पढ़हिं महिसुर अनुकूला ॥ ३ ॥

नभ अरु नगर कोलाहल होई। आपनि पर कछु सुनइ न कोई॥
एहि बिधि रामु मंडपहिं आए। अरघु देइ आसन बैठाए॥ ४॥

Restraining her tears out of regard for the auspicious occasion, Queen Sunayanā performed the ceremony of waving lights with a gladdened heart, and duly completed all the rites prescribed by the Vedas as well as by family usage. The five kinds of music* were being played, accompanied by five varieties of other sounds† and festal songs; carpets of different sorts were spread on the way. After waving lights the queen offered water to Śrī Rāma for washing His hands with and the latter then proceeded to the pavilion. Daśaratha shone in all his glory with his followers; his magnificence put to shame the guardians of the different worlds. From time to time the gods rained down flowers; and the Brahmans recited propitiatory texts appropriate to the occasion. There was such a great uproar in the heavens as well as in the city that no one could hear one's own words, much less of others. In this way Śrī Rāma entered the pavilion; after offering Him water to wash His hands with, He was conducted to His seat. (1—4)

छं०—बैठारि आसन आरती करि निरखि बरु सुखु पावहीं।
मनि बसन भूषन भूरि वारहिं नारि मंगल गावहीं॥
ब्रह्मादि सुरबर बिप्र बेष बनाइ कौतुक देखहीं।
अवलोकि रघु कुल कमल रबि छबि सुफल जीवन लेखहीं॥

When Rāma was installed on the seat reserved for Him, lights were waved round Him and everyone rejoiced to behold the bridegroom, scattering about Him gems and raiments and ornaments in profusion; while women sang festal songs. Brahmā and the other great gods witnessed the spectacle disguised as Brahmans; and as they gazed on the beauty of Śrī Rāma, who delighted Raghu's race even as the sun brings joy to the lotuses, they regarded this privilege as the fulfilment of their life.

दो०—नाऊ बारी भाट नट राम निछावरि पाइ।
मुदित असीसहिं नाइ सिर हरषु न हृदयँ समाइ॥ ३१९॥

Having gathered the offerings scattered about Śrī Rāma, the barbers, torch-bearers, family bards and dancers bowed their head and gladly invoked blessings on Him with a heart overflowing with joy. (319)

चौ०—मिले जनकु दसरथु अति प्रीतीं। करि बैदिक लौकिक सब रीतीं॥
मिलत महा दोउ राज बिराजे। उपमा खोजि खोजि कबि लाजे॥ १॥

* The five kinds of music referred to above are those produced from:—(1) Viṇā or the lute, (2) the clapping of hands, (3) the clashing of a pair of cymbals, (4) the beating of a kettledrum and (5) the blowing of a trumpet or any other wind instrument.

† The five varieties of other sounds are: (1) Vedadhwani (the murmuring of Vedic texts), (2) Vandidhwani (the praises sung by family bards), (3) Jayadhwani (shouts of victory), (4) Śankhadhwani (the blast of conches), and (5) Dundubhidhwani (beat of drums).

लही न कतहुँ हारि हियँ मानी । इन्ह सम एइ उपमा उर आनी ॥
सामध देखि देव अनुरागे । सुमन बरषि जसु गावन लागे ॥ २ ॥
जगु बिरंचि उपजावा जब तें । देखे सुने ब्याह बहु तब तें ॥
सकल भाँति सम साजु समाजू । सम समधी देखे हम आजू ॥ ३ ॥
देव गिरा सुनि सुंदर साँची । प्रीति अलौकिक दुहुँ दिसि माची ॥
देत पाँवड़े अरघु सुहाए । सादर जनकु मंडपहिं ल्याए ॥ ४ ॥

Having observed every custom that derived its authority from the Vedas or from popular tradition the two kings Janaka and Daśaratha, embraced each other with great love. The two monarchs while embracing each other presented a glorious spectacle; poets made repeated efforts to find a suitable analogy but felt abashed at their failure. Finding no comparison anywhere, they felt baffled and concluded that the pair could be likened to themselves alone. The gods were enraptured to see the tie of love between the two kings united by marriage alliance; raining down flowers they began to sing the glories of both. Ever since Brahmā created the world, we have witnessed and heard of many a marriage; but it is only today that we have seen the pomp and grandeur on both sides so well-balanced in every respect and the fathers of the bride and the bridegroom so well-matched.'' Hearing the above voice from heaven, which was so charming yet so true, there was a flood of transcendent love on both sides. Unrolling beautiful carpets on the way and offering water to wash his hands with, Janaka himself conducted Daśaratha to the pavilion with all honour.

(1—4)

छं०—मंडपु बिलोकि बिचित्र रचनाँ रुचिरताँ मुनि मन हरे ।
निज पानि जनक सुजान सब कहुँ आनि सिंघासन धरे ॥
कुल इष्ट सरिस बसिष्ट पूजे बिनय करि आसिष लही ।
कौसिकहि पूजत परम प्रीति कि रीति तौ न परै कही ॥

The marvellous art of the pavilion and its charm captivated the heart even of sages; yet the wise Janaka fetched and placed with his own hands thrones for all the honoured guests. He worshipped the sage Vasistha as if he were his own family deity and supplicating before him received his blessings; while the supreme devotion with which he paid his homage to Kauśika was something too great for words.

दो०—बामदेव आदिक रिषय पूजे मुदित महीस ।
दिए दिब्य आसन सबहि सब सन लही असीस ॥ ३२० ॥

King Janaka gladly adored Vāmadeva (another family preceptor of King Daśaratha) and the other Ṛṣis as well; he gave them all gorgeous seats and received blessings from all of them in return.

(320)

चौ०—बहुरि कीन्हि कोसलपति पूजा । जानि ईस सम भाउ न दूजा ॥
कीन्हि जोरि कर बिनय बड़ाई । कहि निज भाग्य बिभव बहुताई ॥ १ ॥

पूजे भूपति सकल बराती । समधी सम सादर सब भाँती ॥
आसन उचित दिए सब काहू । कहौं काह मुख एक उछाहू ॥ २ ॥
सकल बरात जनक सनमानी । दान मान बिनती बर बानी ॥
बिधि हरि हरु दिसिपति दिनराऊ । जे जानहिं रघुबीर प्रभाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
कपट बिप्र बर बेष बनाएँ । कौतुक देखहिं अति सचु पाएँ ॥
पूजे जनक देव सम जानें । दिए सुआसन बिनु पहिचानें ॥ ४ ॥

Again he paid divine honours to the King of Ayodhyā, taking him to be the peer of Śiva and none other; and mentioning how his fortune and rank had been enhanced through relation with King Daśaratha, he made humble supplication to the latter and extolled him with joined palms. King Janaka worshipped all the members of the bridegroom's party with the same honour in every respect as he had paid to the bridegroom's father, and assigned appropriate seats to them all. How am I to describe with my one tongue the warmth of his feeling? Janaka honoured the whole bridegroom's party with gifts, polite behaviour, supplication and sweet words. Brahmā, Hari, Hara, the guardians of the eight quarters of the world* and the sun-god, all of whom had knowledge of Śrī Rāma's glory, disguised themselves as noble Brahmans and witnessed the spectacle with great delight. Janaka worshipped them as on a par with gods and, though he recognized them not, assigned them exalted seats. (1—4)

छं०—पहिचान को केहि जान सबहिं अपान सुधि भोरी भई ।
आनंद कंदु बिलोकि दूलहु उभय दिसि आनँदमई ॥
सुर लखे राम सुजान पूजे मानसिक आसन दए ।
अवलोकि सीलु सुभाउ प्रभु को बिबुध मन प्रमुदित भए ॥

Who should recognize and whom should one know, when everyone had forgotten one's own self? As they gazed on the bridegroom, who was Bliss personified, joy was diffused on both sides (in the bridegroom's party as well as in the court of Janaka). The all-wise Rāma recognized the gods, worshipped them mentally and assigned them seats of His own fancy. And the immortals were delighted at heart to perceive the congenial manners and gentle disposition of the Lord.

दो०—रामचंद्र मुख चंद्र छबि लोचन चारु चकोर ।
करत पान सादर सकल प्रेमु प्रमोदु न थोर ॥ ३२१ ॥

The graceful eyes of all fondly drank in the beauty of Śrī Rāmachandra's countenance with the utmost love and rapture even as the Chakora bird feeds on the moon's rays. (321)

*The guardians of the eight quarters of the world are: (1) Indra (the lord of celestials), of the east; (2) Agni (fire-god), of the south-east; (3) Yama (the god dispensing the fruit of one's good or evil actions), of the south; (4) Nirṛti (the god of death), of the south-west; (5) Varuṇa (the god of water), of the west; (5) Vāyu (the wind-god), of the north-west; (7) Kuvera (the god of riches), of the north; and (8) Īśāna (Śiva), of the north-east.

चौ०—समउ बिलोकि बसिष्ठ बोलाए । सादर सतानंदु सुनि आए ॥
बेगि कुअँरि अब आनहु जाई । चले मुदित मुनि आयसु पाई ॥ १ ॥
रानी सुनि उपरोहित बानी । प्रमुदित सखिन्ह समेत सयानी ॥
बिप्र बधू कुलबृद्ध बोलाईं । करि कुल रीति सुमंगल गाईं ॥ २ ॥
नारि बेष जे सुर बर बामा । सकल सुभायँ सुंदरी स्यामा ॥
तिन्हहि देखि सुखु पावहिं नारीं । बिनु पहिचानि प्रानहु ते प्यारीं ॥ ३ ॥
बार बार सनमानहिं रानी । उमा रमा सारद सम जानी ॥
सीय सँवारि समाजु बनाई । मुदित मंडपहिं चलीं लवाई ॥ ४ ॥

Perceiving that the time of wedding had arrived, Vasiṣṭha sent for Śatānanda with all the honour due to him, and on hearing the call the latter came with all reverence. "Kindly go and bring the bride quickly now." Receiving the sage's order he gladly left. The wise queen with her associates was highly pleased to hear the priest's message; she sent for a few Brahman ladies and the elder ladies of the family, who performed the family rites and sang charming festal songs. The consorts of the principal gods, who were disguised as mortal women, were all naturally lovely and in the prime of their youth. The ladies of Janaka's household were delighted to see them and, even though none recognized them, the ladies held them dearer than their life. The queen honoured them again and again treating them on a par with Umā, Ramā and Śāradā. After adorning Sītā and forming a circle about Her they joyously conducted Her to the pavilion. (1—4)

छं०—चलि ल्याइ सीतहि सखीं सादर सजि सुमंगल भामिनीं ।
नवसप्त साजें सुंदरीं सब मत्त कुंजर गामिनीं ॥
कल गान सुनि मुनि ध्यान त्यागहिं काम कोकिल लाजहीं ।
मंजीर नूपुर कलित कंकन ताल गति बर बाजहीं ॥

Equipping themselves with auspicious materials Sītā's companions and other ladies conducted Her to the pavilion with due honour; each of them was lovely of form and had practised all the sixteen forms of adornment and moved with the grace of an elephant in rut. At the sound of their melodious strains the sages felt obliged to give up their meditation, and Love's own cuckoos were abashed. Their ornaments for the toes and ankles and the charming bangles on their wrists produced a delightful sound keeping tune with their songs.

दो०—सोहति बनिता बृंद महुँ सहज सुहावनि सीय ।
छबि ललना गन मध्य जनु सुषमा तिय कमनीय ॥ ३२२ ॥

Sītā in Her native loveliness shone forth among the bevy of ladies as a charming personification of Beauty in the midst of the Graces. (322)

चौ०—सिय सुंदरता बरनि न जाई । लघु मति बहुत मनोहरताई ॥
आवत दीखि बरातिन्ह सीता । रूप रासि सब भाँति पुनीता ॥ १ ॥

सबहि मनहिं मन किए प्रनामा । देखि राम भए पूरनकामा ॥
हरषे दसरथ सुतन्ह समेता । कहि न जाइ उर आनँदु जेता ॥ २ ॥
सुर प्रनामु करि बरिसहिं फूला । मुनि असीस धुनि मंगल मूला ॥
गान निसान कोलाहलु भारी । प्रेम प्रमोद मगन नर नारी ॥ ३ ॥
एहि बिधि सीय मंडपहिं आई । प्रमुदित सांति पढ़हिं मुनिराई ॥
तेहि अवसर कर बिधि ब्यवहारू । दुहुँ कुलगुर सब कीन्ह अचारू ॥ ४ ॥

Sītā's elegant form baffles all description: so poor is my wit and so surpassing Her charm. When the members of the bridegroom's party saw Sītā approach, a veritable storehouse of beauty and spotless in every way, all greeted Her from the core of their heart. At the sight of Jānakī Rāma had His heart's desire fulfilled. King Daśaratha with all his other sons was filled with delight; the joy of their heart could not be expressed. The gods made obeisance and rained down flowers; while the sages uttered their benedictions, which were the source of all blessings. The songs that the ladies sang, combined with the sound of kettledrums, produced a loud symphony; men and women both were lost in love and rejoicing. In this manner Sītā entered the pavilion, while great sages recited propitiatory texts in great joy. The two family preceptors (Vasiṣṭha and Śatānanda) performed all the religious rites and ceremonies and observed the family customs. (1—4)

छं०—आचारु करि गुर गौरि गनपति मुदित बिप्र पुजावहीं ।
सुर प्रगटि पूजा लेहिं देहिं असीस अति सुखु पावहीं ॥
मधुपर्क मंगल द्रब्य जो जेहि समय मुनि मन महुँ चहैं ।
भरे कनक कोपर कलस सो तब लिएहिं परिचारक रहैं ॥ १ ॥
कुल रीति प्रीति समेत रबि कहि देत सबु सादर कियो ।
एहि भाँति देव पुजाइ सीतहि सुभग सिंघासनु दियो ॥
सिय राम अवलोकनि परसपर प्रेमु काहु न लखि परै ।
मन बुद्धि बर बानी अगोचर प्रगट कबि कैसें करै ॥ २ ॥

Having observed the family customs the Gurus (Vasiṣṭha and Śatānanda) in great joy directed the Brahmans to worship Goddess Gaurī and Her son Gaṇeśa; the gods accepted the homage in visible form and gave their blessing with great delight. Whatever auspicious article such as a mixture of honey* etc. the sages mentally sought at any particular moment, attendants stood ever ready with gold trays and pitchers full of that substance. The sun-god himself lovingly pointed out the family usages, which were all scrupulously observed. Having thus caused Sītā to worship the gods, the sages assigned Her a beautiful throne. The mutual love

* The mixture referred to above, which is known by the name of 'Madhuparka' is usually composed of curds, clarified butter, water, honey and sugar. It is a respectful offering made to a guest or to the bridegroom on his arrival at the door of the bride's father.

with which Sītā and Rāma regarded each other could not be perceived by anyone. It was beyond the reach of the best mind, intellect and speech ; how, then, could the poet express it ? (1—2)

दो०—होम समय तनु धरि अनलु अति सुख आहुति लेहिं ।
बिप्र बेष धरि बेद सब कहि बिबाह बिधि देहिं ॥ ३२३ ॥

While oblations were offered to the sacred fire, the fire-god in person accepted the offerings with great delight; and the Vedas in the guise of Brahmans directed the procedure of the nuptial ceremony. (323)

चौ०—जनक पाटमहिषी जग जानी । सीय मातु किमि जाइ बखानी ॥
सुजसु सुकृत सुख सुंदरताई । सब समेटि बिधि रची बनाई ॥ १ ॥
समउ जानि मुनिबरन्ह बोलाईं । सुनत सुआसिनि सादर ल्याईं ॥
जनक बाम दिसि सोह सुनयना । हिमगिरि संग बनी जनु मयना ॥ २ ॥
कनक कलस मनि कोपर रूरे । सुचि सुगंध मंगल जल पूरे ॥
निज कर मुदित रायँ अरु रानी । धरे राम के आगें आनी ॥ ३ ॥
पढ़हिं बेद मुनि मंगल बानी । गगन सुमन झरि अवसरु जानी ॥
बरु बिलोकि दंपति अनुरागे । पाय पुनीत पखारन लागे ॥ ४ ॥

What words can describe the world-renowned queen-consort of Janaka and Sītā's mother ? The Creator had exhausted in fashioning her all the bright glory, virtue, joy and beauty. Perceiving the appropriate time, the great sages sent for her; and in response to their call married women whose husbands were alive brought her with due honour. Queen Sunayanā shone forth to Janaka's left even as Menā beside Himavān (the mountain-king). The king and queen joyfully brought and placed with their own hands gold vases and beautiful trays of jewels filled with holy, scented and auspicious water before Śrī Rāma. The sages recited the Veda in joyous tones and at the proper time flowers rained down from the heavens. The royal couple were enraptured to behold the Bridegroom and began to wash His holy feet.

(1—4)

छं०—लागे पखारन पाय पंकज प्रेम तन पुलकावली ।
नभ नगर गान निसान जय धुनि उमगि जनु चहुँ दिसि चली ॥
जे पद सरोज मनोज अरि उर सर सदैव बिराजहीं ।
जे सकृत सुमिरत बिमलता मन सकल कलि मल भाजहीं ॥ १ ॥
जे परसि मुनिबनिता लही गति रही जो पातकमई ।
मकरंदु जिन्ह को संभु सिर सुचिता अवधि सुर बरनई ॥
करि मधुप मन मुनि जोगि जन जे सेइ अभिमत गति लहैं ।
ते पद पखारत भाग्यभाजनु जनकु जय जय सब कहैं ॥ २ ॥

वर कुअँरि करतल जोरि साखोचारु दोउ कुलगुर करैं ।
भयो पानिगहनु बिलोकि बिधि सुर मनुज मुनि आनँद भरैं ॥
सुखमूल दूलहु देखि दंपति पुलक तन हुलस्यो हियो ।
करि लोक बेद बिधानु कन्यादानु नृपभूषन कियो ॥ ३ ॥
हिमवंत जिमि गिरिजा महेसहि हरिहि श्री सागर दई ।
तिमि जनक रामहि सिय समरपी बिस्व कल कीरति नई ॥
क्यों करै बिनय बिदेहु कियो बिदेहु मूरति सावँरीं ।
करि होमु बिधिवत गाँठि जोरी होन लागीं भावँरीं ॥ ४ ॥

They began to lave Śrī Rāma's lotus feet; their whole frame was thrilled with emotion. The sounds of singing and kettledrums and shouts of victory in the heavens as well as in the city overflowed as it were in all direction. The lotus feet that ever sparkle in the lake of Śiva's bosom, by thinking of which even for once the mind gets purified and all the impurities of the Kali age are driven away, by whose touch the sage Gotama's wife, who was full of sin, attained salvation, whose nectar in the form of the river Gangā adorns Śambhu's head and is declared by the gods as the holiest of the holy, and by resorting to which with their bee-like minds sages and mystics attain the goal of their liking, it is those very feet that the most lucky Janaka washed amidst shouts of victory from all corners. Joining the palms of the Bride and the Bridegroom, both the family priests recited the genealogy of the two families; and perceiving that the Bridegroom had accepted the Bride's hand, Brahmā and the other divinities as well as men and sages were filled with delight. As the king and queen gazed on the Bridegroom, who was the very fountain of joy, the hair on their body stood erect, while their heart was filled with rapture. And having gone through all the rites sanctioned either by the Vedas or by family usage, the glorious King Janaka gave his Daughter to the Bridegroom. As Himavān gave away Girijā to the great Lord Śiva, and the deity presiding over seas bestowed Śrī on Hari, so did Janaka give Sītā to Rāma and thereby earned fair renown of an unprecedented character. King Videha (Janaka) was unable to make any supplication, since that Prince (Śrī Rāma) of swarthy complexion had justified his name (Videha) by making him forget everything about his body. When oblations had been offered to the sacred fire with due rite, the ends of garments of the Bride and the Bridegroom were tied together (as a token of their indissoluble union) and the couple began to circumambulate the fire (in order to show that the two had been united in the presence of the fire-god as a witness). (1—4)

दो०—जय धुनि बंदी बेद धुनि मंगल गान निसान ।
सुनि हरषहिं बरषहिं बिबुध सुरतरु सुमन सुजान ॥ ३२४ ॥

At the sound of the huzzas, the praises sung by the bards, the recitation of the Vedic texts, the din of the festal songs and the beating of kettledrums the wise immortals rejoiced and rained down flowers from the trees of paradise. (324)

चौ०—कुअँरु कुअँरि कल भावँरि देहीं । नयन लाभु सब सादर लेहीं ॥
जाइ न बरनि मनोहर जोरी । जो उपमा कछु कहौं सो थोरी ॥ १ ॥

राम सीय सुंदर प्रतिछाहीं । जगमगात मनि खंभन माहीं ॥
मनहुँ मदन रति धरि बहु रूपा । देखत राम बिआहु अनूपा ॥ २ ॥
दरस लालसा सकुच न थोरी । प्रगटत दुरत बहोरि बहोरी ॥
भए मगन सब देखनिहारे । जनक समान अपान बिसारे ॥ ३ ॥
प्रमुदित मुनिन्ह भावँरीं फेरीं । नेगसहित सब रीति निबेरीं ॥
राम सीय सिर सेंदुर देहीं । सोभा कहि न जाति बिधि केहीं ॥ ४ ॥
अरुन पराग जलजु भरि नीकें । ससिहि भूष अहि लोभ अमी कें ॥
बहुरि बसिष्ठ दीन्हि अनुसासन । बरु दुलहिनि बैठे एक आसन ॥ ५ ॥

The Bride and Bridegroom performed the circumambulation with charming paces; while all present feasted their admiring gaze on the spectacle. The lovely couple was beyond description; whatever comparison might be suggested would fall short of the reality. Lovely images of Rāma and Sītā were reflected on the pillars of jewels and shone as if Love and his consort, Rati, witnessed Śrī Rāma's matchless wedding appearing in numerous forms. Their curiosity and bashfulness were equally great; that is why they revealed themselves and went out of sight again and again. All the spectators were enraptured; like Janaka they forgot all about themselves. Joyously the sages bade the Bride and Bridegroom pace round the fire and accomplished all the rites including the ceremonial gifts. Śrī Rāma applied the vermilion to Sītā's forehead, a sight the charm of which was altogether beyond description. It seemed as if with a lotus surcharged with reddish pollen a serpent thirsting for nectar decorated the moon. Then Vasiṣṭha gave the direction and the Bride and Bridegroom sat together on the same seat.

(1–5)

छं०—बैठ बरासन रामु जानकि मुदित मन दसरथु भए ।
तनु पुलक पुनि पुनि देखि अपनें सुकृत सुरतरु फल नए ॥
भरि भुवन रहा उछाहु राम बिवाहु भा सबहीं कहा ।
केहि भाँति बरनि सिरात रसना एक यहु मंगलु महा ॥ १ ॥
तब जनक पाइ बसिष्ठ आयसु ब्याह साज सँवारि कै ।
मांडवी श्रुतकीरति उरमिला कुअँरि लईं हँकारि कै ॥
कुसकेतु कन्या प्रथम जो गुन सील सुख सोभामई ।
सब रीति प्रीति समेत करि सो ब्याहि नृप भरतहि दई ॥ २ ॥
जानकी लघु भगिनी सकल सुंदरि सिरोमनि जानि कै ।
सो तनय दीन्ही ब्याहि लखनहि सकल बिधि सनमानि कै ॥
जेहि नामु श्रुतकीरति सुलोचनि सुमुखि सब गुन आगरी ।
सो दई रिपुसूदनहि भूपति रूप सील उजागरी ॥ ३ ॥

अनुरूप बर दुलहिनि परस्पर लखि सकुच हियँ हरषहीं ।
सब मुदित सुंदरता सराहहिं सुमन सुर गन बरषहीं ॥
सुंदरीं सुंदर बरन्ह सह सब एक मंडप राजहीं ।
जनु जीव उर चारिउ अवस्था बिभुन सहित बिराजहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma and Princess Jānakī sat together on a costly seat and King Daśaratha was glad of heart to see them. Joy thrilled along his veins again and again as he perceived the wish-yielding tree of his meritorious deeds bear new fruits. There was rejoicing all over the universe; everyone proclaimed that Śrī Rāma's wedding had been accomplished. With one tongue how could anyone describe in full the joy which knew no bounds? Then, receiving Vasiṣṭha's order, Janaka sent for the other three princesses, Māṇḍavī, Śrutakīrti and Urmilā, each clad in a bride's attire. The eldest daughter of his younger brother Kuśaketu, who was an embodiment of goodness, virtue, joy and beauty, he gave in marriage to Bharata after performing every rite with love. Jānakī's younger sister (Urmilā), whom he knew to be the crest-jewel of charming girls, Janaka gave in marriage to Lakṣmaṇa with all honour. Finally the bright-eyed and fair-faced princess Śrutakīrti, who was a mine of all virtues and was well-known for her beauty and amiability, the king gave to Ripusūdana. When each pair of bride and bridegroom saw that they were well-matched with each others*, they felt shy, but rejoiced in their heart of hearts; everyone joyfully applauded the beauty of each pair, while the gods rained down flowers. All the lovely brides with their handsome bridegrooms shone forth in the same pavilion as though the four states of consciousness (viz., waking, dream, sound sleep and absorption into Brahma) with the phase of the soul presiding over each gleamed all at once in the heart of an individual. (1—4)

दो०—मुदित अवधपति सकल सुत बधुन्ह समेत निहारि ।
जनु पाए महिपाल मनि क्रियन्ह सहित फल चारि ॥ ३२५ ॥

The king of Ayodhya was delighted to see his four sons with their brides, as though that jewel of monarchs had realized the four ends of life, (viz., worldly riches, religious merit, sensuous enjoyment and Liberation) along with the four processes of their realization (viz. sacrificial performances, piety, practice of Yoga and spiritual exercises). (325)

चौ०—जसि रघुबीर ब्याह बिधि बरनी । सकल कुअँर ब्याहे तेहिं करनी ॥
कहि न जाइ कछु दाइज भूरी । रहा कनक मनि मंडपु पूरी ॥ १ ॥
कंबल बसन बिचित्र पटोरे । भाँति भाँति बहु मोल न थोरे ॥
गज रथ तुरग दास अरु दासी । धेनु अलंकृत कामदुहा सी ॥ २ ॥
बस्तु अनेक करिअ किमि लेखा । कहि न जाइ जानहिं जिन्ह देखा ॥
लोकपाल अवलोकि सिहाने । लीन्ह अवधपति सबु सुखु माने ॥ ३ ॥

* Rāma and Bharata, who had a swarthy complexion were united with Sītā and Māṇḍavī respectively (who were both fair in complexion); while Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna (who were fair of hue) were married with Urmilā and Śrutakīrti (both of whom were swarthy of complexion).

दीन्ह जाचकन्हि जो जेहि भावा । उबरा सो जनवासेहिं आवा ॥
तब कर जोरि जनकु मृदु बानी । बोले सब बरात सनमानी ॥ ४ ॥

All the other princes were married according to the same rites as have been described in the case of Śrī Rāma's marriage. The richness of the dowry was beyond description; the whole pavilion was packed with gold and jewels. There were a number of shawls, linen and silk of various colours and designs and of immense value, elephants, chariots, horses, men-servants and maid-servants and cows adorned with ornaments and vying with the cow of plenty and many other things which were more than one could count and defied description. They alone who saw the dowry could have some idea of it; even the guardians of the different realms regarded it with envy. The king of Ayodhyā gladly accepted it all and gave to the beggars whatever they liked: only that which was left was taken to the lodgings of the bridegroom's party. Then with joined palms Janaka honoured the whole bridegroom's party and spoke in gentle tones.

(1—4)

छं०—सनमानि सकल बरात आदर दान बिनय बड़ाइ कै ।
प्रमुदित महा मुनि बृंद बंदे पूजि प्रेम लड़ाइ कै ॥
सिरु नाइ देव मनाइ सब सन कहत कर संपुट किएँ ।
सुर साधु चाहत भाउ सिंधु कि तोष जल अंजलि दिएँ ॥ १ ॥
कर जोरि जनकु बहोरि बंधु समेत कोसलराय सों ।
बोले मनोहर बयन सानि सनेह सील सुभाय सों ॥
संबंध राजन रावरें हम बड़े अब सब बिधि भए ।
एहि राज साज समेत सेवक जानिबे बिनु गथ लए ॥ २ ॥
ए दारिका परिचारिका करि पालिबीं करुना नई ।
अपराधु छमिबो बोलि पठए बहुत हौं ढीट्यो कई ॥
पुनि भानुकुलभूषन सकल सनमान निधि समधी किए ।
कहि जाति नहिं बिनती परस्पर प्रेम परिपूरन हिए ॥ ३ ॥
बृंदारका गन सुमन बरिसहिं राउ जनवासेहि चले ।
दुंदुभी जय धुनि बेद धुनि नभ नगर कौतूहल भले ॥
तब सखीं मंगल गान करत मुनीस आयसु पाइ कै ।
दूलह दुलहिनिन्ह सहित सुंदरि चलीं कोहबर ल्याइ कै ॥ ४ ॥

Having honoured the whole bridegroom's party with courtesy, gifts, supplication and compliments, King Janaka joyfully paid his homage to and greeted the great sages after bestowing his loving attention on them. Bowing his head and invoking the gods he addressed them all with joined palms, "Gods and holy men seek one's love alone; can the ocean be propitiated by offering as much water as can be held within one's palms?" Again, with joined palms Janaka and his younger brother

(Kuśaketu) submitted to the King of Kosala in winning words full of affection, courtesy and sincerity, "By our connection with you, O king, we have now been exalted in every respect; along with this kingdom and all that we possess pray look upon us both as your slaves purchased without any consideration. Taking these girls as your hand-maidens foster them with your unremitting kindness. Pardon me my offence; it was too presumptuous on my part to have called you here." The ornament of the solar race, King Daśaratha, in his turn flooded the bride's father with all kinds of honour. The courtesy they showed to each other was past all telling; for their hearts overflowed with love. Hosts of gods rained down flowers and King Daśaratha proceeded to the palace where he and his party had been lodged amidst the crash of kettledrums, shouts of victory and the chanting of Vedic texts. There was much rejoicing both in the heavens and in the city. Then, receiving orders from the chief of sages, Vasiṣṭha, the lovely companions of the brides conducted them along with the bridegrooms to the apartment where the guardian deities of the family had been installed for worship during the wedding days. (1—4)

दो०—पुनि पुनि रामहि चितव सिय सकुचति मनु सकुचै न।
हरत मनोहर मीन छबि प्रेम पिआसे नैन ॥ ३२६ ॥

Again and again did Sītā gaze on Śrī Rāma and shrink out of modesty; her heart, however, refused to shrink. Her charming eyes, athirst with love, outshone the fish. (326)

[PAUSE 11 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—स्याम सरीरु सुभायँ सुहावन। सोभा कोटि मनोज लजावन ॥
जावक जुत पद कमल सुहाए। मुनि मन मधुप रहत जिन्ह छाए ॥ १ ॥
पीत पुनीत मनोहर धोती। हरति बाल रबि दामिनि जोती ॥
कल किंकिनि कटि सूत्र मनोहर। बाहु बिसाल बिभूषन सुंदर ॥ २ ॥
पीत जनेउ महाछबि देई। कर मुद्रिका चोरि चितु लेई ॥
सोहत ब्याह साज सब साजे। उर आयत उरभूषन राजे ॥ ३ ॥
पिअर उपरना काखासोती। दुहुँ आँचरन्हि लगे मनि मोती ॥
नयन कमल कल कुंडल काना। बदनु सकल सौंदर्ज निधाना ॥ ४ ॥
सुंदर भृकुटि मनोहर नासा। भाल तिलकु रुचिरता निवासा ॥
सोहत मौरु मनोहर माथे। मंगलमय मुकुता मनि गाथे ॥ ५ ॥

Rāma's swarthy form was naturally graceful; His beauty put to shame millions of Cupids. Dyed with red lac, His lotus feet, which ever attracted the bee-like minds of sages, looked most lovely. His sacred and charming yellow loin-cloth outshone the rising sun as well as the lightning. The girdle round His waist together with the sweet-sounding small bells was soul-enchanting; His long arms were adorned with beautiful ornaments. The yellow sacred thread greatly enhanced His charm; while the ring on His finger would ravish all hearts. Beautified with all sorts of wedding adornments He looked most charming; His broad chest was adorned with appropriate

ornaments. He had a yellow scarf with fringes of pearls and gems slung partly under His right armpit and partly across His left shoulder. He had a pair of lotus-like eyes and beautiful pendants dangling from the lobes of his ears; while His countenance was a storehouse of all comeliness. He had lovely eyebrows and a charming nose; while the sacred mark on His forehead was an abode of loveliness. And His head was adorned with a beautiful wedding crown which had auspicious pearls and gems strung together and woven into it.

(1—5)

छं०—गाथे महामनि मौर मंजुल अंग सब चित चोरहीं ।
पुर नारि सुर सुंदरीं बरहि बिलोकि सब तिन तोरहीं ॥
मनि बसन भूषन वारि आरति करहिं मंगल गावहीं ।
सुर सुमन बरिसहिं सूत मागध बंदि सुजसु सुनावहीं ॥ १ ॥
कोहबरहिं आने कुअँर कुअँरि सुआसिनिन्ह सुख पाइ कै ।
अति प्रीति लौकिक रीति लागीं करन मंगल गाइ कै ॥
लहकौरि गौरि सिखाव रामहि सीय सन सारद कहैं ।
रनिवासु हास बिलास रस बस जन्म को फलु सब लहैं ॥ २ ॥
निज पानि मनि महुँ देखिअति मूरति सुरूपनिधान की ।
चालति न भुजबल्ली बिलोकनि बिरह भय बस जानकी ॥
कौतुक बिनोद प्रमोदु प्रेमु न जाइ कहि जानहिं अलीं ।
बर कुअँरि सुंदर सकल सखीं लवाइ जनवासेहि चलीं ॥ ३ ॥
तेहि समय सुनिअ असीस जहँ तहँ नगर नभ आनँदु महा ।
चिरु जिअहुँ जोरीं चारु चार्‌यो मुदित मन सबहीं कहा ॥
जोगींद्र सिद्ध मुनीस देव बिलोकि प्रभु दुंदुभि हनी ।
चले हरषि बरषि प्रसून निज निज लोक जय जय जय भनी ॥ ४ ॥

Precious gems had been strung together and woven into the lovely wedding crown and each of His limbs ravished the heart. At the sight of the bridegroom (Śrī Rāma) the women of the city as well as pretty celestial ladies all tore blades of grass (in order to avert the evil eye). After scattering about Him gems, raiment and ornaments they waved lights around Him and sang festal songs. The gods rained down flowers; while bards, panegyrists and rhapsodists uttered His praises. Married women, whose husbands were alive, happily brought the brides and bridegrooms to the apartment reserved for the tutelary deities, and with festal songs they most lovingly began to perform customary rites. Goddess Gaurī Herself taught Rāma how to offer a morsel of food to Sītā; while Śāradā urged Sītā to do likewise with Rāma. The whole gynaeceum was absorbed in the delight of merry-making; everyone enjoyed the fruit of her birth. In the gems on Her hand Jānakī saw the reflection of Śrī Rāma, the repository of beauty; hence She dared not move Her arm or eyes for fear of

losing sight of Him. The rapture and love that characterized the gaiety and mirth of the occasion surpassed all telling; Sītā's companions alone knew them. They escorted all the four charming couples to the palace assigned to King Daśaratha and his party. At that moment blessings might be heard on all sides and there was great exultation in the city as well as in the heavens. Everyone exclaimed with a delighted heart, "Long live the four lovely couples!" Great Yogīs, Siddhas, eminent sages and divinities sounded their kettledrums on beholding the Lord; and raining down flowers and crying "Victory, victory, victory" they gladly returned, each to his own realm. (1—4)

दो०—सहित बधूटिन्ह कुअँर सब तब आए पितु पास ।
सोभा मंगल मोद भरि उमगेउ जनु जनवास ॥ ३२७ ॥

Then all the four princes with their brides approached their father. It appeared at that time as if the lodgings of the bridegrooms' party overflowed with beauty, felicity and joy. (327)

चौ०—पुनि जेवनार भई बहु भाँती । पठए जनक बोलाइ बराती ॥
परत पाँवड़े बसन अनूपा । सुतन्ह समेत गवन कियो भूपा ॥ १ ॥
सादर सब के पाय पखारे । जथाजोगु पीढ़न्ह बैठारे ॥
धोए जनक अवधपति चरना । सीलु सनेहु जाइ नहिं बरना ॥ २ ॥
बहुरि राम पद पंकज धोए । जे हर हृदय कमल महुँ गोए ॥
तीनिउ भाइ राम सम जानी । धोए चरन जनक निज पानी ॥ ३ ॥
आसन उचित सबहि नृप दीन्हे । बोलि सूपकारी सब लीन्हे ॥
सादर लगे परन पनवारे । कनक कील मनि पान सँवारे ॥ ४ ॥

Then there was a banquet with a rich variety of dishes, to which Janaka invited all the members of the bridegroom's party. Carpets of incomparable beauty were spread on the way as King Daśaratha sallied forth with his sons. The feet of all were reverently washed and then they were seated on wooden seats according to their rank. Janaka laved the feet of Daśaratha King of Ayodhya; his courtesy and affection were past telling. He then bathed Śrī Rāma's lotus feet, that are enshrined in the lotus-like heart of Śiva. Similarly he washed with his own hands the feet of the other three brothers also, treating them on a par with Śrī Rāma. King Janaka assigned an appropriate seat to each guest and sent for all the cooks (for service). Leaves joined together so as to serve for plates were set before the guests with due reverence—leaves which were made of precious stones and had been joined with gold pins. (1—4)

दो०—सूपोदन सुरभी सरपि सुंदर स्वादु पुनीत ।
छन महुँ सब कें परुसि गे चतुर सुआर बिनीत ॥ ३२८ ॥

Clever and polite cooks passed round, and in a trice they served all with curry and boiled rice mixed with clarified butter extracted from cows' milk; all of which were pleasing and delicious and had been cooked with purity. (328)

चौ०—पंच कवल करि जेवन लागे । गारि गान सुनि अति अनुरागे ॥
भाँति अनेक परे पकवाने । सुधा सरिस नहिं जाहिं बखाने ॥ १ ॥
परुसन लगे सुआर सुजाना । बिंजन बिबिध नाम को जाना ॥
चारि भाँति भोजन बिधि गाई । एक एक बिधि बरनि न जाई ॥ २ ॥
छरस रुचिर बिंजन बहु जाती । एक एक रस अगनित भाँती ॥
जेवँत देहिं मधुर धुनि गारी । लै लै नाम पुरुष अरु नारी ॥ ३ ॥
समय सुहावनि गारि बिराजा । हँसत राउ सुनि सहित समाजा ॥
एहि बिधि सबहीं भोजनु कीन्हा । आदर सहित आचमनु दीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

Taking the five initial morsels as an oblation for the five vital airs the guests commenced dining, and were enraptured to hear songs full of raillery. Confections of various kinds, sweet as ambrosia and more delicious than one could describe, were served to them. Expert cooks then began to serve a variety of seasoned articles which were too numerous to be named. Of the four categories of food mentioned in the scriptures (viz., 1. that which can be directly swallowed, 2. that which must be masticated before it can be gulped, 3. that which can be licked with the tongue and 4. that which can be sucked) each comprised an indescribable variety of dishes. Similarly there were seasoned dishes of various kinds, having six different flavours, each flavour being exhibited in numberless varieties. As the dinner was in progress, women railed in melodious strains at men and women both, mentioning each by name. Even raillery at an opportune time is agreeable and welcome; King Daśaratha and his whole party felt amused to hear it. In this way the whole party dined and in the end they were all reverently supplied with water to rinse their mouth with.

(1—4)

दो०—देइ पान पूजे जनक दसरथु सहित समाज ।
जनवासेहि गवने मुदित सकल भूप सिरताज ॥ ३२९ ॥

Offering betel-leaves in due form, Janaka paid his homage to King Daśaratha and his company; and the crown of all monarchs, Daśaratha, retired to his own apartments with a cheerful heart.

(329)

चौ०—नित नूतन मंगल पुर माहीं । निमिष सरिस दिन जामिनि जाहीं ॥
बड़े भोर भूपतिमनि जागे । जाचक गुन गन गावन लागे ॥ १ ॥
देखि कुअँर बर बधुन्ह समेता । किमि कहि जात मोदु मन जेता ॥
प्रातक्रिया करि गे गुरु पाहीं । महाप्रमोदु प्रेमु मन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
करि प्रनामु पूजा कर जोरी । बोले गिरा अमिअँ जनु बोरी ॥
तुम्हरी कृपाँ सुनहु मुनिराजा । भयउँ आजु मैं पूरनकाजा ॥ ३ ॥
अब सब बिप्र बोलाइ गोसाईं । देहु धेनु सब भाँति बनाईं ॥
सुनि गुर करि महिपाल बड़ाई । पुनि पठए मुनि बृंद बोलाई ॥ ४ ॥

Every day there was a new festival in the city; days and nights passed like a moment. The jewel of kings, Daśaratha, woke up at a very early

hour; and mendicants began to sing his praises. As he gazed upon the princes with their beautiful brides, the rapture of his soul was beyond all telling. Having finished his morning routine he called on his Guru with a heart full of exultation and love. Making obeisance to him and paying him his homage the king with joined palms addressed him in a voice steeped as it were in nectar, "Listen, O chief of sages: by your grace I have realized all my ambitions today. Now summoning all the Brahmans, O holy sir, present them with cows adorned in every way." On hearing these words the preceptor applauded the king and then sent for the troops of sages. (1—4)

दो०—बामदेउ अरु देवरिषि बालमीकि जाबालि ।
आए मुनिबर निकर तब कौसिकादि तपसालि ॥ ३३० ॥

Then came Vāmadeva, the celestial sage Nārada, Vālmīki, Jābāli, Viśwāmitra and hosts of other great sages given to austerities. (330)

चौ०—दंड प्रनाम सबहि नृप कीन्हे । पूजि सप्रेम बरासन दीन्हे ॥
चारि लच्छ बर धेनु मगाईं । कामसुरभि सम सील सुहाईं ॥ १ ॥
सब बिधि सकल अलंकृत कीन्हीं । मुदित महिप महिदेवन्ह दीन्हीं ॥
करत बिनय बहु बिधि नरनाहू । लहेउँ आजु जग जीवन लाहू ॥ २ ॥
पाइ असीस महीसु अनंदा । लिए बोलि पुनि जाचक बृंदा ॥
कनक बसन मनि हय गय स्यंदन । दिए बूझि रुचि रबिकुलनंदन ॥ ३ ॥
चले पढ़त गावत गुन गाथा । जय जय जय दिनकर कुल नाथा ॥
एहि बिधि राम बिआह उछाहू । सकइ न बरनि सहस मुख जाहू ॥ ४ ॥

The king threw himself upon the ground before them all and worshipping them with love offered them seats of honour. Next he sent for four lakhs of cows, all as gentle and beautiful as the cow of plenty; and adorning them all in every possible way he gladly bestowed them upon the Brahmans The king supplicated them in many ways and said, "It is only today that I have attained the fruit of my existence." The delight of the solar race was glad to receive their blessings and then sent for beggars and bestowed on them, according to their liking, gold, wearing apparel, jewels, horses, elephants and chariots. Singing the king's praises and saying, "Glory, glory, all glory to the lord of the solar race!" they all went away. In this way the rejoicing in connection with Śrī Rāma's wedding was more than the thousand-mouthed serpent-king could tell. (1—4)

दो०—बार बार कौसिक चरन सीसु नाइ कह राउ ।
यह सबु सुखु मुनिराज तव कृपा कटाच्छ पसाउ ॥ ३३१ ॥

Again and again the king bowed his head at the feet of Kauśika and said, "All this joy, O chief of sages, is a gift of your gracious looks." (331)

चौ०—जनक सनेहु सीलु करतूती । नृपु सब भाँति सराह बिभूती ॥
दिन उठि बिदा अवधपति मागा । राखहिं जनकु सहित अनुरागा ॥ १ ॥

नित नूतन आदरु अधिकाई । दिन प्रति सहस भाँति पहुनाई ॥
नित नव नगर अनंद उछाहू । दसरथ गवनु सोहाइ न काहू ॥ २ ॥
बहुत दिवस बीते एहि भाँती । जनु सनेह रजु बँधे बराती ॥
कौसिक सतानंद तब जाई । कहा बिदेह नृपहि समुझाई ॥ ३ ॥
अब दसरथ कहँ आयसु देहू । जद्यपि छाड़ि न सकहु सनेहू ॥
भलेहिं नाथ कहि सचिव बोलाए । कहि जयजीव सीस तिन्ह नाए ॥ ४ ॥

King Daśaratha extolled in every way Janaka's affection, amiability, affluence and doings. Every morning the King of Ayodhyā asked leave to return home; but each time Janaka would lovingly detain him. The royal guest received greater and enhanced attentions from day to day and was entertained in a thousand ways each day. The city witnessed a new rejoicing and festivity every day; no one liked Daśaratha's departure. In this way a number of days passed, as though members of the bridegroom's party were tied by cords of love. The sages Kauśika and Śatānanda then called on King Videha and advised him saying, "Now you must let Daśaratha go, even though you may not be able to part with him out of love." "Very well, my lord", replied the king, and sent for his ministers, who came and bowed their head saying, "May you be victorious, may you live long!"

(1–4)

दो०—अवधनाथु चाहत चलन भीतर करहु जनाउ ।
भए प्रेमबस सचिव सुनि बिप्र सभासद राउ ॥ ३३२ ॥

"The king of Ayodhya longs to depart: make this known in the gynaeceum." At these words the ministers, Brahmans, courtiers as well as the king himself were overwhelmed with emotion.

(332)

चौ०—पुरबासी सुनि चलिहि बराता । बूझत बिकल परस्पर बाता ॥
सत्य गवनु सुनि सब बिलखाने । मनहुँ साँझ सरसिज सकुचाने ॥ १ ॥
जहँ जहँ आवत बसे बराती । तहँ तहँ सिद्ध चला बहु भाँती ॥
बिबिध भाँति मेवा पकवाना । भोजन साजु न जाइ बखाना ॥ २ ॥
भरि भरि बसहँ अपार कहारा । पठईं जनक अनेक सुसारा ॥
तुरग लाख रथ सहस पचीसा । सकल सँवारे नख अरु सीसा ॥ ३ ॥
मत्त सहस दस सिंधुर साजे । जिन्हहि देखि दिसिकुंजर लाजे ॥
कनक बसन मनि भरि भरि जाना । महिषीं धेनु बस्तु बिधि नाना ॥ ४ ॥

When the people of the city heard that the bridegrooms' party was leaving, they anxiously asked one another if it were a fact. When they learnt that the departure of the guests was certain, they were all sad in the same way as lotuses get shrivelled up in the evening. Provisions of various kinds were sent to all those places where the bridegrooms' party had halted while coming from Ayodhyā. Dry fruits and confections of all kinds and other articles of food too numerous to be mentioned were sent by Janaka on the back of oxen and through numberless porters along with a number

of beautiful bedsteads. He also sent 1,00,000 horses and 25,000 chariots, all decorated from top to bottom, 10,000 adorned elephants in rut, that put to shame the elephants guarding the eight quarters, besides cartloads of gold, wearing apparel and jewels and even so she-buffaloes, cows and many other articles of various kinds. (1—4)

दो०—दाइज अमित न सकिअ कहि दीन्ह बिदेहँ बहोरि ।
जो अवलोकत लोकपति लोक संपदा थोरि ॥ ३३३ ॥

In this way King Videha gave once more a dowry which was immeasurable and beyond all telling, and before which the wealth possessed by the lords of the different worlds looked small. (333)

चौ०—सबु समाजु एहि भाँति बनाई । जनक अवधपुर दीन्ह पठाई ॥
चलिहि बरात सुनत सब रानीं । बिकल मीनगन जनु लघु पानीं ॥ १ ॥
पुनि पुनि सीय गोद करि लेहीं । देइ असीस सिखावनु देहीं ॥
होएहु संतत पियहि पिआरी । चिरु अहिवात असीस हमारी ॥ २ ॥
सासु ससुर गुर सेवा करेहू । पति रुख लखि आयसु अनुसरेहू ॥
अति सनेह बस सखीं सयानी । नारि धरम सिखवहिं मृदु बानी ॥ ३ ॥
सादर सकल कुअँरि समुझाई । रानिन्ह बार बार उर लाईं ॥
बहुरि बहुरि भेटहिं महतारीं । कहहिं बिरंचि रचीं कत नारीं ॥ ४ ॥

Having got all the equipage arranged in the order mentioned above, Janaka had everything despatched to Ayodhyā. When the queens heard that the bridegrooms' party was about to start, they all felt miserable even as fish when faced with shortage of water. Again and again they took Sītā in their lap and blessed and exhorted her in the following words: "May you be ever beloved of your lord, and may you live long with him: this is our blessing. Serve the parents of your husband and other elders and do the bidding of your lord according to his pleasure." In their excess of love Sītā's clever companions too taught her the duties of a housewife in soft accents. The queens politely admonished all the other princesses too and clasped them to their bosom again and again; and as the mothers embraced their daughters time and again, they exclaimed, "Why did Brahmā ever create a woman?" (1—4)

दो०—तेहि अवसर भाइन्ह सहित रामु भानु कुल केतु ।
चले जनक मंदिर मुदित बिदा करावन हेतु ॥ ३३४ ॥

That very moment did Rāma, the chief of the solar race, gladly proceeded along with His brothers to Janaka's palace to take leave. (334)

चौ०—चारिउ भाइ सुभायँ सुहाए । नगर नारि नर देखन धाए ॥
कोउ कह चलन चहत हहिं आजू । कीन्ह बिदेह बिदा कर साजू ॥ १ ॥
लेहु नयन भरि रूप निहारी । प्रिय पाहुने भूप सुत चारी ॥
को जानै केहिं सुकृत सयानी । नयन अतिथि कीन्हे बिधि आनी ॥ २ ॥

मरनसीलु जिमि पाव पिऊषा । सुरतरु लहै जनम कर भूखा ॥
पाव नारकी हरिपदु जैसें । इन्ह कर दरसनु हम कहँ तैसें ॥ ३ ॥
निरखि राम सोभा उर धरहू । निज मन फनि मूरति मनि करहू ॥
एहि बिधि सबहि नयन फलु देता । गए कुअँर सब राज निकेता ॥ ४ ॥

The people of the city, both men and women, ran to see the four brothers, who were naturally lovely. Said one, "They intend leaving today; King Videha has made all arrangements for their farewell. So let your eyes drink in their beauty; the four princes have been our most welcome guests. Who knows, friend, what virtuous deed we have performed, in return for which Providence has unexpectedly brought them before our eyes ? Even as a dying man should stumble on nectar or he who has been starving all his life should be able to discover a wish-yielding tree or as one of the damned in hell should attain to the abode of Śrī Hari, even so have we been blessed with their sight. Gaze on Śrī Rāma's beauty and treasure it in your heart; let your mind fondly cherish His image even as a serpent loves the gem in its hood." Thus delighting the eyes of all, the four princes went to the royal palace. (1—4)

दो०—रूप सिंधु सब बंधु लखि हरषि उठा रनिवासु ।
करहिं निछावरि आरती महा मुदित मन सासु ॥ ३३५ ॥

The ladies of the gynaeceum were transported with joy to behold the four brothers, who were oceans of beauty as it were, and the mothers-in-law in their ecstatic mood scattered gifts and waved lights about the bridegrooms. (335)

चौ०—देखि राम छबि अति अनुरागीं । प्रेमबिबस पुनि पुनि पद लागीं ॥
रही न लाज प्रीति उर छाई । सहज सनेहु बरनि किमि जाई ॥ १ ॥
भाइन्ह सहित उबटि अन्हवाए । छरस असन अति हेतु जेवाँए ॥
बोले रामु सुअवसरु जानी । सील- सनेह सकुचमय बानी ॥ २ ॥
राउ अवधपुर चहत सिधाए । बिदा होन हम इहाँ पठाए ॥
मातु मुदित मन आयसु देहू । बालक जानि करब नित नेहू ॥ ३ ॥
सुनत बचन बिलखेउ रनिवासू । बोलि न सकहिं प्रेमबस सासू ॥
हृदयँ लगाइ कुअँरि सब लीन्ही । पतिन्ह सौंपि बिनती अति कीन्ही ॥ ४ ॥

Greatly moved at the sight of Śrī Rāma's beauty they affectionately fell at His feet again and again. Their heart being rapt in love, the feeling of shyness had bid them adieu; how could their natural affection for their sons-in-law be described ? After rubbing the body of Śrī Rāma and His brothers with cosmetics they were given a bath and were most lovingly entertained with dishes containing the six flavours. Finding it a suitable opportunity Śrī Rāma spoke in accents full of amiability, affection and modesty, "Our royal father intends leaving for Ayodhyā, and has sent us here to take leave of you. Therefore, mothers, grant us permission with a cheerful mind and ever regard us with affection as your own children." The ladies of the gynaeceum were distressed to hear these words; the mothers-in-law were too

overwhelmed with emotion to speak a word. They clasped all the princesses to their bosom and while giving them to their lords made humble submission to them. (1–4)

छं०—करि बिनय सिय रामहि समरपी जोरि कर पुनि पुनि कहै ।
बलि जाउँ तात सुजान तुम्ह कहुँ बिदित गति सब की अहै ॥
परिवार पुरजन मोहि राजहि प्रानप्रिय सिय जानिबी ।
तुलसीस सीलु सनेहु लखि निज किंकरी करि मानिबी ॥

With humble submission Queen Sunayanā committed Sītā to Rāma, and with joined palms prayed again and again, "I offer myself as sacrifice to You, my all-wise darling; You know what passes in the mind of all. May you know that Sītā is dear as life itself to the whole family, nay, to the entire population of the city, much more to me and to her royal father. Therefore, considering her meekness and affection, O Lord of Tulasī, treat her as Your maid-servant.

सो०—तुम्ह परिपूरन काम जान सिरोमनि भावप्रिय ।
जन गुन गाहक राम दोष दलन करुनायतन ॥ ३३६ ॥

"You have Your desires ever fulfilled, You are the crest-jewel of the wise; and it is love alone that attracts You. You perceive only the good points of Your devotees; You eradicate their weaknesses and are an abode of mercy, Rāma!" (336)

चौ०—अस कहि रही चरन गहि रानी । प्रेम पंक जनु गिरा समानी ॥
सुनि सनेह सानी बर बानी । बहु बिधि राम सासु सनमानी ॥ १ ॥
राम बिदा मागत कर जोरी । कीन्ह प्रनामु बहोरि बहोरी ॥
पाइ असीस बहुरि सिरु नाई । भाइन्ह सहित चले रघुराई ॥ २ ॥
मंजु मधुर मूरति उर आनी । भईं सनेह सिथिल सब रानी ॥
पुनि धीरजु धरि कुअँरि हँकारीं । बार बार भेटहिं महतारीं ॥ ३ ॥
पहुँचावहिं फिरि मिलहिं बहोरी । बढ़ी परस्पर प्रीति न थोरी ॥
पुनि पुनि मिलत सखिन्ह बिलगाई । बाल बच्छ जिमि धेनु लवाई ॥ ४ ॥

So saying, the queen remained clinging to His feet; it seemed as if her speech had been lost in the quicksands of love. On hearing her fine speech, which was full of affection, Śrī Rāma honoured His mother-in-law in ways more than one. While seeking her permission with joined palms He made obeisance to her again and again. Having received her blessings the Lord of Raghus bowed His head once more and then departed with His brothers. Treasuring up in their heart Śrī Rāma's lovely and beautiful image all the queens were overcome with emotion. Then, recovering themselves, they called their daughters and embraced them again and again. They escorted them to some distance and then embraced them once more; the love on both sides swelled to a considerable extent. While meeting their daughters again and again they were parted by the companions of the princesses even as a cow who has just brought forth a calf may be parted from the latter. (1–4)

दो०—प्रेम बिबस नर नारि सब सखिन्ह सहित रनिवासु ।
मानहुँ कीन्ह बिदेहपुर करुनाँ बिरहँ निवासु ॥ ३३७ ॥

All men and women including the companions of the princesses and the ladies of the gynaeceum were overpowered by emotion; it seemed as if pathos and the parting of lovers had taken up their abode in the capital of the Videhas. (337)

चौ०—सुक सारिका जानकी ज्याए । कनक पिंजरन्हि राखि पढ़ाए ॥
ब्याकुल कहहिं कहाँ बैदेही । सुनि धीरजु परिहरइ न केही ॥ १ ॥
भए बिकल खग मृग एहि भाँती । मनुज दसा कैसें कहि जाती ॥
बंधु समेत जनकु तब आए । प्रेम उमगि लोचन जल छाए ॥ २ ॥
सीय बिलोकि धीरता भागी । रहे कहावत परम बिरागी ॥
लीन्हि रायँ उर लाइ जानकी । मिटी महा मरजाद ग्यान की ॥ ३ ॥
समुझावत सब सचिव सयाने । कीन्ह बिचारु न अवसर जाने ॥
बारहिं बार सुता उर लाईं । सजि सुंदर पालकीं मगाईं ॥ ४ ॥

The parrots and *mainas* who had been reared by Princess Jānakī and having been kept in cages of gold had been taught to speak, cried in distress, "Where is Videha's daughter ?" On hearing their wail who would have the patience to stand the sight ? When birds and beasts were distressed in this way, how can one depict the feelings of the human breast. Then came King Janaka with his younger brother (Kuśadhwaja); due to excess of emotion tears rushed to his eyes. Although he was reputed to be a man of supreme dispassion, his strength of mind took leave of him the moment he gazed on Sītā. The king clasped Jānakī to his bosom and the great embankment of wisdom toppled down. All his wise counsellors admonished him; and realizing that it was no occasion for wailing, the king recovered himself. Again and again he pressed his daughters to his bosom and ordered beautiful and well-equipped palanquins to be brought. (1–4)

दो०—प्रेम बिबस परिवारु सबु जानि सुलगन नरेस ।
कुअँरि चढ़ाईं पालकिन्ह सुमिरे सिद्धि गनेस ॥ ३३८ ॥

The whole family was overwhelmed with emotion; yet, perceiving that the auspicious moment had arrived, the king invoked Lord Gaṇeśa and His consort, Siddhi, and helped the princesses to ascend the palanquins. (338)

चौ०—बहु बिधि भूप सुता समुझाईं । नारिधरमु कुलरीति सिखाईं ॥
दासीं दास दिए बहुतेरे । सुचि सेवक जे प्रिय सिय केरे ॥ १ ॥
सीय चलत ब्याकुल पुरबासी । होहिं सगुन सुभ मंगल रासी ॥
भूसुर सचिव समेत समाजा । संग चले पहुँचावन राजा ॥ २ ॥
समय बिलोकि बाजने बाजे । रथ गज बाजि बरातिन्ह साजे ॥
दसरथ बिप्र बोलि सब लीन्हे । दान मान परिपूरन कीन्हे ॥ ३ ॥

चरन सरोज धूरि धरि सीसा । मुदित महीपति पाइ असीसा ॥
सुमिरि गजाननु कीन्ह पयाना । मंगलमूल सगुन भए नाना ॥ ४ ॥

King Janaka admonished his daughters in ways more than one, and instructed them in the duties of a woman as well as in family customs. He bestowed upon Sītā a good many men-servants and maid-servants who had been her trusted and favourite attendants. As She proceeded on Her journey the citizens felt miserable; while good omens, which were all fountains of blessings, appeared. Accompanied by a crowd of Brahmans and his counsellors the king himself followed his daughters to escort them. When it was found that the time of departure had come, music began to play and the members of the bridegrooms' party made ready their chariots, elephants and horses. King Daśaratha summoned all the Brahmans and sated them with gifts and courtesy. The king placed the dust of their lotus feet on his head and was glad to receive their benediction. Invoking the elephant-headed Gaṇeśa he set out on his journey, when many good omens, which were the roots of felicity, occurred. (1—4)

दो०—सुर प्रसून बरषहिं हरषि करहिं अपछरा गान ।
चले अवधपति अवधपुर मुदित बजाइ निसान ॥ ३३९ ॥

The gods gladly rained down flowers and heavenly nymphs sang, as the lord of Ayodhyā joyfully set forth for his capital amidst the clash of kettledrums. (339)

चौ०—नृप करि बिनय महाजन फेरे । सादर सकल मागने टेरे ॥
भूषन बसन बाजि गज दीन्हे । प्रेम पोषि ठाढ़े सब कीन्हे ॥ १ ॥
बार बार बिरिदावलि भाषी । फिरे सकल रामहि उर राखी ॥
बहुरि बहुरि कोसलपति कहहीं । जनकु प्रेमबस फिरै न चहहीं ॥ २ ॥
पुनि कह भूपति बचन सुहाए । फिरिअ महीस दूरि बड़ि आए ॥
राउ बहोरि उतरि भए ठाढ़े । प्रेम प्रबाह बिलोचन बाढ़े ॥ ३ ॥
तब बिदेह बोले कर जोरी । बचन सनेह सुधाँ जनु बोरी ॥
करौं कवन बिधि बिनय बनाई । महाराज मोहि दीन्हि बड़ाई ॥ ४ ॥

King Daśaratha politely persuaded the respectable citizens to retire and having reverently called all the mendicants he bestowed on them ornaments and clothes as well as horses and elephants and satiating them with love he made them all self-supporting. Glorifying the king again and again they all returned with Śrī Rāma in their heart. The Lord of Ayodhyā importuned King Janaka over and over again; but out of affection for his relative the latter would not turn back. Once more King Daśaratha addressed him in polite terms, "I beg you to turn back, O king; you have already advanced too far." At last King Daśaratha got down from his chariot and remained standing, while his eyes overflowed with torrents of love. Then spoke King Videha with joined palms and in accents imbued with the nectar of love, "How and in what words should I make my supplication to you? You have conferred such high honour on me, O great king." (1—4)

दो०—कोसलपति समधी सजन सनमाने सब भाँति ।
मिलनि परसपर बिनय अति प्रीति न हृदयँ समाति ॥ ३४० ॥

The king of Kosala showed every respect to the father of the bride and his relative, Janaka. The embrace in which they held each other was characterized by utmost humility and their heart could not contain the love they felt. (340)

चौ०—मुनि मंडलिहि जनक सिरु नावा । आसिरबादु सबहि सन पावा ॥
सादर पुनि भेंटे जामाता । रूप सील गुन निधि सब भ्राता ॥ १ ॥
जोरि पंकरुह पानि सुहाए । बोले बचन प्रेम जनु जाए ॥
राम करौं केहि भाँति प्रसंसा । मुनि महेस मन मानस हंसा ॥ २ ॥
करहिं जोग जोगी जेहि लागी । कोहु मोहु ममता मदु त्यागी ॥
ब्यापकु ब्रह्मु अलखु अबिनासी । चिदानंदु निरगुन गुनरासी ॥ ३ ॥
मन समेत जेहि जान न बानी । तरकि न सकहिं सकल अनुमानी ॥
महिमा निगमु नेति कहि कहई । जो तिहुँ काल एकरस रहई ॥ ४ ॥

King Janaka bowed his head to the throng of sages and received blessings from them all. Next he reverently embraced his sons-in-laws, the four brothers, each a mine of beauty, amiability and goodness; and joining his graceful lotus hands he spoke in accents begotten of love as it were, "How can I extol You, O Rāma, sporting as You do in the hearts of sages as well as of the great Lord Śiva like a swan in the Mansarovar lake. That for whose sake Yogis (those given to contemplation) practise Yoga (contemplation) renouncing anger, infatuation, the feeling of meum and pride, the all-pervading Brahma (Absolute) who is imperceptible and imperishable, the embodiment of consciousness and bliss, at once the sum and negation of all attributes, who is beyond the ken of speech and mind, who is past all speculation, but is only inferred by all and who is the same at all times,— (1--4)

दो०—नयन बिषय मो कहुँ भयउ सो समस्त सुख मूल ।
सबइ लाभु जग जीव कहँ भएँ ईसु अनुकूल ॥ ३४१ ॥

"That root of all joy has appeared before my eyes! Everything is easy of access in this world to a living being when God is propitious. (341)

चौ०—सबहि भाँति मोहि दीन्हि बड़ाई । निज जन जानि लीन्ह अपनाई ॥
होहिं सहस दस सारद सेषा । करहिं कलप कोटिक भरि लेखा ॥ १ ॥
मोर भाग्य राउर गुन गाथा । कहि न सिराहिं सुनहु रघुनाथा ॥
मैं कछु कहउँ एक बल मोरें । तुम्ह रीझहु सनेह सुठि थोरें ॥ २ ॥
बार बार मागउँ कर जोरें । मनु परिहरै चरन जनि भोरें ॥
सुनि बर बचन प्रेम जनु पोषे । पूरनकाम रामु परितोषे ॥ ३ ॥
करि बर बिनय ससुर सनमाने । पितु कौसिक बसिष्ठ सम जाने ॥
बिनती बहुरि भरत सन कीन्ही । मिलि सप्रेमु पुनि आसिष दीन्ही ॥ ४ ॥

"You have exalted me in every way and accepted me as Your own servant. If there were ten thousand Śāradās and Śeṣas, and if they were to count for millions of Kalpas, the tale of my good fortune, I tell You, and the record of Your virtues could not be exhausted, O Lord of Raghus. I make bold to say something on the strength of my conviction that You are pleased with the slightest devotion. I repeatedly beseech You with joined palms that my mind may never be deluded into deserting Your feet." On hearing these polite words saturated with love Śrī Rāma, who had all His desires fulfilled, felt gratified. With the greatest courtesy the latter honoured His father-in-law treating him on a par with His own father, Kauśika or Vasiṣṭha. The king then humbly approached Bharata and embracing him with affection gave him his blessings. (1—4)

दो०—मिले लखन रिपुसूदनहि दीन्हि असीस महीस ।
भए परसपर प्रेमबस फिरि फिरि नावहिं सीस ॥ ३४२ ॥

Next the king embraced and blessed Lakṣmaṇa and Ripusūdana; overpowered by emotion they bowed their heads to one another again and again. (342)

चौ०—बार बार करि बिनय बड़ाई । रघुपति चले संग सब भाई ॥
जनक गहे कौसिक पद जाई । चरन रेनु सिर नयनन्ह लाई ॥ १ ॥
सुनु मुनीस बर दरसन तोरें । अगमु न कछु प्रतीति मन मोरें ॥
जो सुखु सुजसु लोकपति चहहीं । करत मनोरथ सकुचत अहहीं ॥ २ ॥
सो सुखु सुजसु सुलभ मोहि स्वामी । सब सिधि तव दरसन अनुगामी ॥
कीन्हि बिनय पुनि पुनि सिरु नाई । फिरे महीसु आसिषा पाई ॥ ३ ॥
चली बरात निसान बजाई । मुदित छोट बड़ सब समुदाई ॥
रामहि निरखि ग्राम नर नारी । पाइ नयन फलु होहिं सुखारी ॥ ४ ॥

Paying his respectful compliments to Janaka again and again the Lord of Raghus set out on His journey with His three brothers. Janaka approached Kauśika, clasped his feet and put the dust of the same on his head and eyes. He said, "Listen, O lord of sages: to him who has been blessed with your sight nothing is unattainable; such is my heart's conviction. The joy and the bright renown which the regional lords of the universe long to have, but feel too diffident to expect,—such a joy and glory has been brought within my reach; and all achievements follow on seeing you." In these words King Janaka made humble submission to Viśwāmitra, bowing his head again and again, and returned after receiving his blessings. The bridegrooms' party started on its return journey to the sound of kettledrums; all the sections, both big and small, were transported with joy. Men and women of the villages, as they gazed on Śrī Rāma, felt gratified on realizing the object of their eyes. (1—4)

दो०—बीच बीच बर बास करि मग लोगन्ह सुख देत ।
अवध समीप पुनीत दिन पहुँची आइ जनेत ॥ ३४३ ॥

Halting at convenient stages in course of the journey and gladdening the people on the roadside the marriage procession approached Ayodhyā on a sacred day. (343)

चौ०—हने निसान पनव बर बाजे । भेरि संख धुनि हय गय गाजे ॥
झाँझि बिरव डिंडिमीं सुहाई । सरस राग बाजहिं सहनाई ॥ १ ॥
पुर जन आवत अकनि बराता । मुदित सकल पुलकावलि गाता ॥
निज निज सुंदर सदन सँवारे । हाट बाट चौहट पुर द्वारे ॥ २ ॥
गलीं सकल अरगजाँ सिंचाईं । जहँ तहँ चौकें चारु पुराईं ॥
बना बजारु न जाइ बखाना । तोरन केतु पताक बिताना ॥ ३ ॥
सफल पूगफल कदलि रसाला । रोपे बकुल कदंब तमाला ॥
लगे सुभग तरु परसत धरनी । मनिमय आलबाल कल करनी ॥ ४ ॥

Kettledrums were beaten and good tabors sounded, accompanied by the blast of sackbuts and conches, and the neighing of horses and trumpeting of elephants. Similarly there was a clash of cymbals and drums, while clarionets played sweet tunes. The citizens were all delighted to hear the procession coming; the hair on their body stood erect. They all decorated their own beautiful houses as well as the markets, streets, squares and gates of the city. All the lanes were watered with perfumes; here and there festal squares were filled in with elegant devices. The bazar was beautified beyond all description with festal arches, flags, banners and canopies. Trees of the areca-nut, the plantain, the mango, the Bakula, the Kadamba and the Tamāla were transplanted along with their fruit. The beautiful trees thus planted touched the ground (on account of their being laden with fruits); they had basins of precious stones constructed around them with exquisite skill. (1—4)

दो०—बिबिध भाँति मंगल कलस गृह गृह रचे सँवारि ।
सुर ब्रह्मादि सिहाहिं सब रघुबर पुरी निहारि ॥ ३४४ ॥

Festal vases of various kinds were ranged in order in every house; Brahmā and the other gods were filled with envy to see the birthplace of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus). (344)

चौ०—भूप भवनु तेहि अवसर सोहा । रचना देखि मदन मनु मोहा ॥
मंगल सगुन मनोहरताई । रिधि सिधि सुख संपदा सुहाई ॥ १ ॥
जनु उछाह सब सहज सुहाए । तनु धरि धरि दसरथ गृहँ छाए ॥
देखन हेतु राम बैदेही । कहहु लालसा होहि न केही ॥ २ ॥
जूथ जूथ मिलि चलीं सुआसिनि । निज छबि निदरहिं मदन बिलासिनि ॥
सकल सुमंगल सजें आरती । गावहिं जनु बहु बेष भारती ॥ ३ ॥
भूपति भवन कोलाहलु होई । जाइ न बरनि समउ सुखु सोई ॥
कौसल्यादि राम महतारीं । प्रेम बिबस तन दसा बिसारीं ॥ ४ ॥

The king's palace looked very charming on that occasion; its decoration captivated the heart of Cupid himself. It looked as if auspicious omens and loveliness, affluence and mystic powers, joys and smiling prosperity and all kinds of rejoicings had assumed a naturally beautiful form and taken their abode in the palace of King Daśaratha. Tell me who would not feel tempted to have a look at Śrī Rāma and Videha's Daughter? Married women,

whose husbands were alive, sallied forth in troops, each eclipsing Love's consort (Rati) by her beauty. They all carried articles of good omen and were equipped with lights for waving round the bridegrooms. As they moved along singing all the way, it appeared as if Goddess Bhāratī (the goddess of speech) had appeared in so many forms. The king's palace was full of hilarious tumult; the joy of the occasion was ineffable. Kausalya and other mothers of Śrī Rama were so overwhelmed with emotion that they forgot their own body. (1–4)

दो०—दिए दान बिप्रन्ह बिपुल पूजि गनेस पुरारि।
प्रमुदित परम दरिद्र जनु पाइ पदारथ चारि ॥ ३४५ ॥

After worshipping Lord Gaṇesa and the Slayer of the demon Tripura, they bestowed enormous gifts upon the Brahmans and were supremely delighted as an utterly indigent man who had attained the four great prizes of life. (345)

चौ०—मोद प्रमोद बिबस सब माता। चलहिं न चरन सिथिल भए गाता॥
राम दरस हित अति अनुरागीं। परिछनि साजु सजन सब लागीं॥ १॥
बिबिध बिधान बाजने बाजे। मंगल मुदित सुमित्राँ साजे॥
हरद दूब दधि पल्लव फूला। पान पूगफल मंगल मूला॥ २॥
अच्छत अंकुर लोचन लाजा। मंजुल मंजरि तुलसि बिराजा॥
छुहे पुरट घट सहज सुहाए। मदन सकुन जनु नीड़ बनाए॥ ३॥
सगुन सुगंध न जाहिं बखानी। मंगल सकल सजहिं सब रानी॥
रचीं आरतीं बहुत बिधाना। मुदित करहिं कल मंगल गाना॥ ४॥

All the mothers were so overcome with joy and rapture that their feet refused to walk and all their limbs began to droop as it were. Full of intense longing for a sight of Śrī Rāma they began to get everything ready for the reception of their sons. Music of every kind started playing, while Sumitrā gladly got together articles of good omen such as turmeric, blades of Dūrvā grass, curds, ordinary leaves, flowers, betel-leaves, areca-nuts, auspicious roots, unbroken rice, sprouts of barley, Gorochana, parched paddy and lovely blossoms of the Basil plant. Exceedingly charming gold vases, painted with various colours, looked like nests built by Cupid's own birds. Auspicious perfumes defied all description. In this way all the queens prepared all sorts of auspicious articles. They got ready rows of lights arranged in various devices for waving round their sons and with a cheerful heart sang melodious festal strains. (1–4)

दो०—कनक थार भरि मंगलन्हि कमल करन्हि लिएँ मात।
चलीं मुदित परिछनि करन पुलक पल्लवित गात ॥ ३४६ ॥

Carrying in their lotus hands salvers of gold laden with articles of good omen, the queen-mothers proceeded joyfully to greet their sons, every limb of their body throbbing with emotion. (346)

चौ०—धूप धूम नभु मेचक भयऊ । सावन घन घमंडु जनु ठयऊ ॥
सुरतरु सुमन माल सुर बरषहिं । मनहुँ बलाक अवलि मनु करषहिं ॥ १ ॥
मंजुल मनिमय बंदनिवारे । मनहुँ पाकरिपु चाप सँवारे ॥
प्रगटहिं दुरहिं अटन्ह पर भामिनि । चारु चपल जनु दमकहिं दामिनि ॥ २ ॥
दुंदुभि धुनि घन गरजनि घोरा । जाचक चातक दादुर मोरा ॥
सुर सुगंध सुचि बरषहिं बारी । सुखी सकल ससि पुर नर नारी ॥ ३ ॥
समउ जानि गुर आयसु दीन्हा । पुर प्रबेसु रघुकुलमनि कीन्हा ॥
सुमिरि संभु गिरिजा गनराजा । मुदित महीपति सहित समाजा ॥ ४ ॥

The sky became dark with the fumes of burning incense, as though overhung with the fast gathering clouds of the month of Śrāvaṇa (August). The gods rained down wreaths of flowers from the trees of paradise, which looked like rows of herons in their graceful flight. Lovely festoons made of jewels looked like rainbows appearing in a row. Charming ladies, appearing on house-tops as quickly as they went out of sight, looked like the fitful flashes of lightning. The beat of drums resembled the crash of thunder; while beggars were as clamorous as the Chātaka birds, frogs and peacocks. The gods poured down showers in the form of sacred perfumes, which gladdened the crop in the form of all the citizens. Perceiving that a propitious hour had arrived the preceptor (Vasiṣṭha) gave the word, and the jewel of Raghu's race, King Daśaratha, gladly entered the city with all his followers, fixing his mind on Bhagavān Śambhu, Goddess Pārvatī and Their son, Lord Gaṇeśa.

(1—4)

दो०—होहिं सगुन बरषहिं सुमन सुर दुंदुभीं बजाइ ।
बिबुध बधू नाचहिं मुदित मंजुल मंगल गाइ ॥ ३४७ ॥

Good omens manifested themselves and the gods rained down flowers to the beat of drums; while celestial dames danced for joy, singing melodious triumphal songs.

(347)

चौ०—मागध सूत बंदि नट नागर । गावहिं जसु तिहु लोक उजागर ॥
जय धुनि बिमल बेद बर बानी । दस दिसि सुनिअ सुमंगल सानी ॥ १ ॥
बिपुल बाजने बाजन लागे । नभ सुर नगर लोग अनुरागे ॥
बने बराती बरनि न जाहीं । महा मुदित मन सुख न समाहीं ॥ २ ॥
पुरबासिन्ह तब राय जोहारे । देखत रामहि भए सुखारे ॥
करहिं निछावरि मनिगन चीरा । बारि बिलोचन पुलक सरीरा ॥ ३ ॥
आरति करहिं मुदित पुर नारी । हरषहिं निरखि कुअँर बर चारी ॥
सिबिका सुभग ओहार उघारी । देखि दुलहिनिन्ह होहिं सुखारी ॥ ४ ॥

Bards, minstrels, rhapsodists and skilled dancers chanted the glory of Him (Śrī Rāma) who illumines all the three worlds. Auspicious shouts of victory and the sacred and melodious chanting of the Vedas were heard in all the ten directions. Musical instruments of all kinds began to play; gods

in heaven and men in the city were enraptured alike. Members of the bridegrooms' party looked smart beyond description. They were highly delighted and could not contain themselves for joy. The people of Ayodhyā then greeted the king, and were gladdened at the very sight of Śrī Rāma. They scattered about Him jewels and vestments; their eyes were full of tears and their body thrilled over. The women of the city gladly waved lights around His head and rejoiced to see the four noble princes. They were all the more gratified when they lifted the curtains of the beautiful palanquins and beheld the brides. (1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि सबही देत सुखु आए राजदुआर।
मुदित मातु परिछनि करहिं बधुन्ह समेत कुमार ॥ ३४८ ॥

Thus gladdening the heart of all they arrived at the entrance of the royal palace; the delighted mothers waved lights over the princes and their brides. (348)

चौ०—करहिं आरती बारहिं बारा। प्रेमु प्रमोदु कहै को पारा ॥
भूषन मनि पट नाना जाती। करहिं निछावरि अगनित भाँती ॥ १ ॥
बधुन्ह समेत देखि सुत चारी। परमानंद मगन महतारी ॥
पुनि पुनि सीय राम छबि देखी। मुदित सफल जग जीवन लेखी ॥ २ ॥
सखीं सीय मुख पुनि पुनि चाही। गान करहिं निज सुकृत सराही ॥
बरषहिं सुमन छनहिं छन देवा। नाचहिं गावहिं लावहिं सेवा ॥ ३ ॥
देखि मनोहर चारिउ जोरीं। सारद उपमा सकल ढँढोरीं ॥
देत न बनहिं निपट लघु लागीं। एकटक रहीं रूप अनुरागीं ॥ ४ ॥

They waved lights again and again; the love and rapture which they felt in their heart was beyond all words. They scattered about their sons and daughters-in-law ornaments, jewels and costumes of various kinds and numberless other articles. The queen-mothers were enraptured to behold their four sons along with their brides. As they gazed again and again on the beauty of Sītā and Rāma they felt delighted and regarded the object of their life in this world as realized. The queen-mothers' companions, as they gazed on Sītā's countenance over and over again, sang and extolled their good fortune. Moment after moment the gods rained down flowers, danced and sang and offered their homage. Seeing the four charming couples Goddess Śāradā ransacked all her stock of similes, but her choice fell on none; they appeared too trivial. She therefore stood gazing with unwinking eyes, enchanted with their beauty. (1—4)

दो०—निगम नीति कुल रीति करि अरघ पाँवड़े देत।
बधुन्ह सहित सुत परिछि सब चलीं लवाइ निकेत ॥ ३४९ ॥

After performing the rites prescribed by the Vedas or family usage the queen-mothers waved lights over all the princes and their brides and conducted them to the palace, offering water to them as a mark of respect and spreading carpets along the way. (349)

चौ०—चारि सिंघासन सहज सुहाए । जनु मनोज निज हाथ बनाए ॥
तिन्ह पर कुअँर कुअँरि बैठारे । सादर पाय पुनीत पखारे ॥ १ ॥
धूप दीप नैबेद बेद बिधि । पूजे बर दुलहिनि मंगलनिधि ॥
बारहिं बार आरती करहीं । ब्यजन चारु चामर सिर ढरहीं ॥ २ ॥
बस्तु अनेक निछावरि होहीं । भरीं प्रमोद मातु सब सोहीं ॥
पावा परम तत्व जनु जोगीं । अमृतु लहेउ जनु संतत रोगीं ॥ ३ ॥
जनम रंक जनु पारस पावा । अंधहि लोचन लाभु सुहावा ॥
मूक बदन जनु सारद छाई । मानहुँ समर सूर जय पाई ॥ ४ ॥

There were four exquisitely beautiful thrones, which had been fashioned by Cupid with his own hands as it were; the queen-mothers seated the brides and the bridegrooms on them and reverently laved their holy feet. They then worshipped the blessed couples in accordance with the Vedic ritual by offering them incense, light and oblations of food. They passed lights around them again and again and waved beautiful fans and chowries over their heads. They scattered offerings of various kinds about them; the mothers were as full of exultation as a Yogi who has realized the highest truth, or as a lifelong patient who has been able to lay his hands on nectar or as a born pauper who has stumbled on a philosopher's stone, or as a blind man who has regained a good vision, or as a dumb fellow, whose tongue has been transfused with the eloquence of Śāradā, the goddess of speech, or even as a hero who has triumphed in battle.

(1–4)

दो०—एहि सुख ते सत कोटि गुन पावहिं मातु अनंदु ।
भाइन्ह सहित बिआहि घर आए रघुकुलचंदु ॥ ३५० (क) ॥
लोक रीति जननीं करहिं बर दुलहिनि सकुचाहिं ।
मोदु बिनोदु बिलोकि बड़ रामु मनहिं मुसुकाहिं ॥ ३५० (ख) ॥

The mothers derived joy millions of times greater than the joys mentioned above; for in their case it was the Delighter of Raghu's race Himself who had returned home with His brothers duly married. As the mothers performed the traditional rites the brides and their grooms felt shy; while Śrī Rāma smiled within Himself on perceiving the ecstasy and merriment of the occasion.

(350 A-B)

चौ०—देव पितर पूजे बिधि नीकी । पूजीं सकल बासना जी की ॥
सबहि बंदि मागहिं बरदाना । भाइन्ह सहित राम कल्याना ॥ १ ॥
अंतरहित सुर आसिष देहीं । मुदित मातु अंचल भरि लेहीं ॥
भूपति बोलि बराती लीन्हे । जान बसन मनि भूषन दीन्हे ॥ २ ॥
आयसु पाइ राखि उर रामहि । मुदित गए सब निज निज धामहि ॥
पुर नर नारि सकल पहिराए । घर घर बाजन लगे बधाए ॥ ३ ॥
जाचक जन जाचहिं जोइ जोई । प्रमुदित राउ देहिं सोइ सोई ॥
सेवक सकल बजनिआ नाना । पूरन किए दान सनमाना ॥ ४ ॥

The mothers gratefully worshipped the gods and manes with due ceremony; for all the cravings of their heart had been satisfied. Bowing to all they begged as a boon the welfare of Rāma and His brothers. The gods conferred their blessings all unseen, and the mothers gladly received them by spreading the end of their garment (as a token of respect). The king sent for those who had joined the marriage party and gave them vehicles, wearing apparel, jewels and ornaments. Having received the king's permission and enshrining Śrī Rāma's image in their heart they joyfully returned each to his own house. All the men and women of the city were invested with garments and jewels and there was jubilant music in every home. The king in his exultation gave whatever the mendicants asked for. Every attendant and every musician was sated with gifts and kind attentions. (1—4)

दो०—देहिं असीस जोहारि सब गावहिं गुन गन गाथ ।
तब गुर भूसुर सहित गृहँ गवनु कीन्ह नरनाथ ॥ ३५१ ॥

They all saluted and invoked blessing upon the king and sang his praises, and thereafter the king, accompanied by his preceptor and other Brahmans, proceeded to the palace. (351)

चौ०—जो बसिष्ट अनुसासन दीन्ही । लोक बेद बिधि सादर कीन्ही ॥
भूसुर भीर देखि सब रानी । सादर उठीं भाग्य बड़ जानी ॥ १ ॥
पाय पखारि सकल अन्हवाए । पूजि भली बिधि भूप जेवाँए ॥
आदर दान प्रेम परिपोषे । देत असीस चले मन तोषे ॥ २ ॥
बहु बिधि कीन्हि गाधिसुत पूजा । नाथ मोहि सम धन्य न दूजा ॥
कीन्हि प्रसंसा भूपति भूरी । रानिन्ह सहित लीन्हि पग धूरी ॥ ३ ॥
भीतर भवन दीन्ह बर बासू । मन जोगवत रह नृपु रनिवासू ॥
पूजे गुर पद कमल बहोरी । कीन्हि बिनय उर प्रीति न थोरी ॥ ४ ॥

Under Vasiṣṭha's directions he reverently performed all the ceremonies prescribed either by usage or by the Veda. The queens, on seeing a crowd of Brahmans, deemed themselves most fortunate and all rose to greet them. They laved the feet of the holy ones and helped them all perform their ablutions; while the king duly worshipped and entertained them at meal. Overwhelmed with the host's civility, gifts and love, they departed glad of heart invoking blessings on him. To Gādhi's son (Viśwāmitra) he paid homage in various ways and said, "My lord, there is no one so blessed as I am." The king lavished his praises on him and took the dust of his feet with his queens. He assigned the sage a fine quarter in his own palace, while the king and his whole gynaeceum kept a vigilant eye on his wants even though unexpressed. Again he adored the lotus feet of his preceptor (Vasiṣṭha) and made humble submission to him with great affection in his heart. (1—4)

दो०—बधुन्ह समेत कुमार सब रानिन्ह सहित महीसु ।
पुनि पुनि बंदत गुर चरन देत असीस मुनीसु ॥ ३५२ ॥

All the princes with their brides and the king with his queens bowed to the preceptor's feet again and again, while the great sage invoked blessings on them all. (352)

चौ०—बिनय कीन्हि उर अति अनुरागें । सुत संपदा राखि सब आगें ॥
नेगु मागि मुनिनायक लीन्हा । आसिरबादु बहुत बिधि दीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
उर धरि रामहि सीय समेता । हरषि कीन्ह गुर गवनु निकेता ॥
बिप्रबधू सब भूप बोलाईं । चैल चारु भूषन पहिराईं ॥ २ ॥
बहुरि बोलाइ सुआसिनि लीन्हीं । रुचि बिचारि पहिरावनि दीन्हीं ॥
नेगी नेग जोग सब लेहीं । रुचि अनुरूप भूपमनि देहीं ॥ ३ ॥
प्रिय पाहुने पूज्य जे जाने । भूपति भली भाँति सनमाने ॥
देव देखि रघुबीर बिबाहू । बरषि प्रसून प्रसंसि उछाहू ॥ ४ ॥

With his heart overflowing with love he made entreaties to the Guru and placed his sons and all his wealth before him. The great sage, however, asked for and accepted only his customary due (as a family priest) for the ceremonial occasion and blessed him in profusion. And with the image of Sīta and Rama installed in his heart he gladly proceeded to his own residence. The king then summoned all the Brahman dames, and invested them with beautiful robes and ornaments. He next sent for the married women of the city (whose husbands were alive and who, though born in Ayodhya were married elsewhere) and presented them with garments of their liking. All those who were entitled to receive gifts and presents on ceremonial occasions received their dues from the jewel of kings, who rewarded them according to their choice; and the king duly honoured those guests whom he regarded as worthy of affection and adoration. The gods who witnessed Śrī Rāma's wedding rained down flowers, while applauding the jubilation,— (1—4)

दो०—चले निसान बजाइ सुर निज निज पुर सुख पाइ ।
कहत परसपर राम जसु प्रेम न हृदयँ समाइ ॥ ३५३ ॥

And with beat of drum the celestials gladly proceeded each to his abode, talking to one another of Śrī Rama's glory with their heart overflowing with love. (353)

चौ०—सब बिधि सबहि समदि नरनाहू । रहा हृदयँ भरि पूरि उछाहू ॥
जहँ रनिवासु तहाँ पगु धारे । सहित बहूटिन्ह कुअँर निहारे ॥ १ ॥
लिए गोद करि मोद समेता । को कहि सकइ भयउ सुखु जेता ॥
बधू सप्रेम गोद बैठारीं । बार बार हियँ हरषि दुलारीं ॥ २ ॥
देखि समाजु मुदित रनिवासू । सब कें उर अनंद कियो बासू ॥
कहेउ भूप जिमि भयउ बिबाहू । सुनि सुनि हरषु होत सब काहू ॥ ३ ॥
जनक राज गुन सीलु बड़ाई । प्रीति रीति संपदा सुहाई ॥
बहु बिधि भूप भाट जिमि बरनी । रानीं सब प्रमुदित सुनि करनी ॥ ४ ॥

Having shown everyone all possible honour the king, whose heart was overbrimming with joy, visited the private apartments and beheld the princes with

their brides. He gladly took the boys in his arms and experienced a thrill of joy which nobody could tell. Similarly he affectionately seated the brides in his lap and fondled them again and again with a heart full of rapture. The ladies of the gynaeceum were delighted to behold this spectacle; the heart of everyone became an abode of joy. The king related how the wedding had taken place and everyone was delighted to hear the account. The goodness, amiability, nobility, loving nature and the splendid wealth of King Janaka were extolled by King Daśaratha in a variety of ways even as a rhapsodist would do; and the queens were enraptured to hear the record of his doings. (1—4)

दो०—सुतन्ह समेत नहाइ नृप बोलि बिप्र गुर ग्याति।
भोजन कीन्ह अनेक बिधि घरी पंच गइ राति ॥ ३५४ ॥

After bathing with his sons the king called the Brahmans, the preceptor and his own kinsmen and, having entertained them at meal, feasted himself on a variety of dishes till a couple of hours of the night passed. (354)

चौ०—मंगलगान करहिं बर भामिनि। भै सुखमूल मनोहर जामिनि ॥
अँचइ पान सब काहूँ पाए। स्त्रग सुगंध भूषित छबि छाए ॥ १ ॥
रामहि देखि रजायसु पाई। निज निज भवन चले सिर नाई ॥
प्रेमु प्रमोदु बिनोदु बड़ाई। समउ समाजु मनोहरताई ॥ २ ॥
कहि न सकहिं सत सारद सेसू। बेद बिरंचि महेस गनेसू ॥
सो मैं कहौं कवन बिधि बरनी। भूमिनागु सिर धरइ कि धरनी ॥ ३ ॥
नृपु सब भाँति सबहि सनमानी। कहि मृदु बचन बोलाईं रानी ॥
बधू लरिकनीं पर घर आईं। राखेहु नयन पलक की नाईं ॥ ४ ॥

Lovely women sang joyous songs, and the night became a source of delight and soul-enchanting. After rinsing their mouth the king and his party were all given betel-leaves; and adorned with garlands and sandal-paste etc. they looked most charming. Looking once more at Śrī Rāma and having received His permission they proceeded each to his own house, bowing their heads to Him. The love and rapture, merriment and magnanimity, prosperity, splendour and loveliness that manifested there were more than could be told by a hundred Śāradās and Śeṣas, Vedas and Brahmās, Śivas and Gaṇeśas. How, then, can I describe them at length any more than an earthly serpent could support the globe on its head? The king then summoned the queens and, showing every honour to them all, admonished them in gentle tones, "The brides are yet children and have come to a strange house; therefore, take care of them as eyelids protect the eyes. (1—4)

दो०—लरिका श्रमित उनीद बस सयन करावहु जाइ।
अस कहि गे बिश्रामगृहँ राम चरन चितु लाइ ॥ ३५५ ॥

"The boys are tired and feeling drowsy; go and put them to bed." So saying he retired to his own bedroom with his mind fixed on Śrī Rāma's feet. (355)

चौ०—भूप बचन सुनि सहज सुहाए । जरित कनक मनि पलँग डसाए ॥
सुभग सुरभि पय फेन समाना । कोमल कलित सुपेतीं नाना ॥ १ ॥
उपबरहन बर बरनि न जाहीं । स्रग सुगंध मनिमंदिर माहीं ॥
रतनदीप सुठि चारु चँदोवा । कहत न बनइ जान जेहिं जोवा ॥ २ ॥
सेज रुचिर रचि रामु उठाए । प्रेम समेत पलँग पौढ़ाए ॥
अग्या पुनि पुनि भाइन्ह दीन्ही । निज निज सेज सयन तिन्ह कीन्ही ॥ ३ ॥
देखि स्याम मृदु मंजुल गाता । कहहिं सप्रेम बचन सब माता ॥
मारग जात भयावनि भारी । केहि बिधि तात ताड़का मारी ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing the sweet and loving words of the king, the queens made ready bejewelled beds of gold and furnished them with many a rich covering, soft and white as the froth of cows' milk, and pillows more charming than words can tell. The bed-chamber, made of precious stones, was decked with garlands and supplied with perfumes, lamps consisting of bright gems and a canopy lovely beyond words. He alone who saw it could know what it was like. Having thus prepared a number of fine beds the queens took up Śrī Rāma and lovingly laid Him down upon one of them. On being repeatedly asked by Śrī Rāma, His brothers too retired each to his own bed. As the mothers gazed on the swarthy limbs of Śrī Rāma, so soft and attractive, they all exclaimed in loving accents, "How did you manage, dear child, to kill the most dreadful demoness Tāḍakā while on your way to the forest ?

(1—4)

दो०—घोर निसाचर बिकट भट समर गनहिं नहिं काहु ।
मारे सहित सहाय किमि खल मारीच सुबाहु ॥ ३५६ ॥

"How were you able to slay those monstrous giants, the wicked Mārīcha and Subāhu and their followers, who were formidable warriors and counted none before them in battle ?

(356)

चौ०—मुनि प्रसाद बलि तात तुम्हारी । ईस अनेक करवरें टारी ॥
मख रखवारी करि दुहुँ भाईं । गुरु प्रसाद सब बिद्या पाईं ॥ १ ॥
मुनितिय तरी लगत पग धूरी । कीरति रही भुवन भरि पूरी ॥
कमठ पीठि पबि कूट कठोरा । नृप समाज महुँ सिव धनु तोरा ॥ २ ॥
बिस्व बिजय जसु जानकि पाई । आए भवन ब्याहि सब भाई ॥
सकल अमानुष करम तुम्हारे । केवल कौसिक कृपाँ सुधारे ॥ ३ ॥
आजु सुफल जग जनमु हमारा । देखि तात बिधुबदन तुम्हारा ॥
जे दिन गए तुम्हहि बिनु देखें । ते बिरंचि जनि पारहिं लेखें ॥ ४ ॥

"I offer myself, dear child, as a sacrifice for your sake; it was through the goodwill of the sage Viśwāmitra alone that God kept away a number of calamities from you. Even while you and your brother (Lakṣmaṇa) guarded the sacrifice, you were initiated into all the secret lore. At the mere touch

of the dust from your feet the hermit's wife (Ahalyā) attained salvation and your glory filled the whole universe. In the assembly of princes you broke Śiva's bow, hard though it was as a tortoise-shell or adamant or rock. You gained the glory of having triumphed over the world and won the hand of Janaka's daughter, and then returned home after marrying all your brothers. All your actions have been superhuman and were accomplished only by the grace of the sage Kauśika. Our birth into the world has borne fruit today as we now behold, dear child, your moon-like face. Our prayer is that the number of days that have been spent without seeing you, may not be reckoned by the Creator at all." (1—4)

दो०—राम प्रतोषीं मातु सब कहि बिनीत बर बैन।
सुमिरि संभु गुर बिप्र पद किए नीदबस नैन ॥ ३५७ ॥

Śrī Rāma gratified all His mothers by addressing sweet and polite words to them; and fixing His thought on the feet of Lord Śambhu, His preceptors (Vasiṣṭha and Viśwāmitra) and the Brahmans in general, He closed His eyes in order to sleep. (357)

चौ०—नीदउँ बदन सोह सुठि लोना। मनहुँ साँझ सरसीरुह सोना ॥
घर घर करहिं जागरन नारीं। देहिं परसपर मंगल गारीं ॥ १ ॥
पुरी बिराजति राजति रजनी। रानीं कहहिं बिलोकहु सजनी ॥
सुंदर बधुन्ह सासु लै सोईं। फनिकन्ह जनु सिरमनि उर गोईं ॥ २ ॥
प्रात पुनीत काल प्रभु जागे। अरुनचूड़ बर बोलन लागे ॥
बंदि मागधन्हि गुनगन गाए। पुरजन द्वार जोहारन आए ॥ ३ ॥
बंदि बिप्र सुर गुर पितु माता। पाइ असीस मुदित सब भ्राता ॥
जननिन्ह सादर बदन निहारे। भूपति संग द्वार पगु धारे ॥ ४ ॥

Even during sleep His most charming countenance gleamed as a red lotus, half closed at eventide. In every house women kept vigil and railed at one another in auspicious strains. The queens said to one another, "See, friends, how resplendent the city is, and how splendid the night !" The mothers-in-law then slept with the lovely brides enfolded in their arms even as serpents would clasp to their bosom the gems from their hood. At the holy hour before dawn the Lord awoke, and the cocks commenced their beautiful crowing. The rhapsodists and genealogists sang His praises, while the citizens flocked to the gate to make their obeisance. The four brothers saluted the Brahmans and gods as well as their preceptor and parents and were glad to receive their benedictions. The mothers reverently gazed on their countenance as the princes repaired to the gate with the king. (1—4)

दो०—कीन्हि सौच सब सहज सुचि सरित पुनीत नहाइ।
प्रातक्रिया करि तात पहिं आए चारिउ भाइ ॥ ३५८ ॥

Though pure in themselves, the four brothers performed all the purificatory acts (such as evacuating the bowels, cleansing the privates and the hands with

water and clay, rinsing the mouth, brushing the teeth and cleansing the tongue etc.) and bathed in the holy river (Sarayū) and, having gone through their morning routine of prayer etc., returned to their sire. (358)

[PAUSE 3 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—भूप बिलोकि लिए उर लाई । बैठे हरषि रजायसु पाई ॥
देखि रामु सब सभा जुड़ानी । लोचन लाभ अवधि अनुमानी ॥ १ ॥
पुनि बसिष्टु मुनि कौसिकु आए । सुभग आसनन्हि मुनि बैठाए ॥
सुतन्ह समेत पूजि पद लागे । निरखि रामु दोउ गुर अनुरागे ॥ २ ॥
कहहिं बसिष्टु धरम इतिहासा । सुनहिं महीसु सहित रनिवासा ॥
मुनि मन अगम गाधिसुत करनी । मुदित बसिष्ट बिपुल बिधि बरनी ॥ ३ ॥
बोले बामदेउ सब साँची । कीरति कलित लोक तिहुँ माची ॥
सुनि आनंदु भयउ सब काहू । राम लखन उर अधिक उछाहू ॥ ४ ॥

The king, on seeing them, clasped them to his bosom; and the four brothers gladly sat down on receiving his permission. The whole court was gratified to see Rāma and accounted their eyes supremely blest. Then came the sages Vasiṣṭha and Viśwāmitra and were seated on splendid seats. The father and sons adored the sages and clasped their feet and the two preceptors were enraptured to behold Śrī Rāma. The sage Vasiṣṭha narrated sacred legends, while the king and the ladies of the gynaeceum listened. In the course of his narration the sage gladly recounted in diverse ways the doings of Viśwāmitra, that surpassed the imagination even of hermits. Vāmadeva (another family preceptor of King Daśaratha) observed that whatever Vasiṣṭha said was true and that Viśwāmitra's fair renown had pervaded all the three spheres. Everyone rejoiced to hear that, while Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were all the more delighted at heart. (1—4)

दो०—मंगल मोद उछाह नित जाहिं दिवस एहि भाँति ।
उमगी अवध अनंद भरि अधिक अधिक अधिकाति ॥ ३५९ ॥

There was constant felicity, joy and rejoicing and days rolled on in this way. The city of Ayodhyā was inundated with a tidal wave of delight, swelling higher and still higher. (359)

चौ०—सुदिन सोधि कल कंकन छोरे । मंगल मोद बिनोद न थोरे ॥
नित नव सुखु सुर देखि सिहाहीं । अवध जन्म जाचहिं बिधि पाहीं ॥ १ ॥
बिस्वामित्रु चलन नित चहहीं । राम सप्रेम बिनय बस रहहीं ॥
दिन दिन सयगुन भूपति भाऊ । देखि सराह महा मुनिराऊ ॥ २ ॥
मागत बिदा राउ अनुरागे । सुतन्ह समेत ठाढ़ भे आगे ॥
नाथ सकल संपदा तुम्हारी । मैं सेवकु समेत सुत नारी ॥ ३ ॥
करब सदा लरिकन्ह पर छोहू । दरसनु देत रहब मुनि मोहू ॥
अस कहि राउ सहित सुत रानी । परेउ चरन मुख आव न बानी ॥ ४ ॥

दीन्हि असीस बिप्र बहु भाँती । चले न प्रीति रीति कहि जाती ॥
रामु सप्रेम संग सब भाई । आयसु पाइ फिरे पहुँचाई ॥ ५ ॥

After fixing an auspicious day the sacred strings (tied round the wrist of the brides and bridegrooms before the wedding for warding off evil spirits) were untied with no little felicity, joy and merriment. The gods were filled with envy to see new rejoicings every day and begged of the Creator that they might be born in Ayodhyā. Viśwāmitra intended leaving every day, but was detained by Śrī Rāma's affectionate entreaties. Seeing the king's devotion to him grow a hundredfold day after day the great sage Viśwāmitra was full of praise for him. At last when he asked permission to go, the king was greatly moved and with his sons stood before him saying, "My lord, all that I have is yours; while I and my sons and wives are your servants. Be ever gracious to these boys and condescend from time to time to bless me with your sight." So saying, the king with his sons and queens fell at his feet, and speech failed his tongue. The Brahman (Viśwāmitra) invoked upon him every kind of blessing and departed amidst a scene of love that defied all description. Śrī Rāma and all His brothers lovingly escorted him and returned only when they were allowed to go back (1—5)

दो०—राम रूपु भूपति भगति ब्याहु उछाहु अनंदु ।
जात सराहत मनहिं मन मुदित गाधिकुलचंदु ॥ ३६० ॥

The delighter of Gādhi's race gladly went on his way praising to himself Śrī Rāma's beauty, King Daśaratha's piety, the wedding of Śrī Rāma and Sītā and the festivities and rejoicings connected therewith (360)

चौ०—बामदेव रघुकुल गुर ग्यानी । बहुरि गाधिसुत कथा बखानी ॥
सुनि मुनि सुजसु मनहिं मन राऊ । बरनत आपन पुन्य प्रभाऊ ॥ १ ॥
बहुरे लोग रजायसु भयऊ । सुतन्ह समेत नृपति गृहँ गयऊ ॥
जहँ तहँ राम ब्याहु सबु गावा । सुजसु पुनीत लोक तिहुँ छावा ॥ २ ॥
आए ब्याहि रामु घर जब तें । बसइ अनंद अवध सब तब तें ॥
प्रभु बिबाहँ जस भयउ उछाहू । सकहिं न बरनि गिरा अहिनाहू ॥ ३ ॥
कबिकुल जीवनु पावन जानी । राम सीय जसु मंगल खानी ॥
तेहि ते मैं कछु कहा बखानी । करन पुनीत हेतु निज बानी ॥ ४ ॥

Vāmadeva and the wise preceptor of Raghu's race, Vasiṣṭha, once more narrated the story of Viswāmitra (Gādhi's son). On hearing the sage's bright glory the king praised to himself the value of his stock of merits (which attracted the sage to his house and won for him his favour). At the royal command the people dispersed, while the king with his sons returned to his palace. Everywhere the people sang the story of Śrī Rāma's wedding, and His holy and fair fame was diffused through all the three spheres. From the day Śrī Rāma came home duly married, every kind of joy took its abode in Ayodhyā. The festivities that followed the Lord's wedding were more than the goddess

of speech or the lord of serpents, Śeṣa, could tell. I know that the glory of Śrī Rāma and Sītā is the very life and sanctifier of the race of poets and a mine of blessings; that is why I have said something about it just to hallow my speech.

(1—4)

छं०—निज गिरा पावनि करन कारन राम जसु तुलसीं कह्यो ।
रघुबीर चरित अपार बारिधि पारु कबि कौनें लह्यो ॥
उपबीत ब्याह उछाह मंगल सुनि जे सादर गावहीं ।
बैदेहि राम प्रसाद ते जन सर्बदा सुखु पावहीं ॥

For the purpose of hallowing his speech has Tulasīdāsa sung Śrī Rāma's glory; otherwise the story of Śrī Rāma is a limitless ocean, which no poet has ever been able to cross. Those men who reverently hear or sing the tale of the auspicious festivities attendant on Śrī Rāma's investiture with the sacred thread and marriage shall ever be happy by the grace of Videha's Daughter and Śrī Rāma.

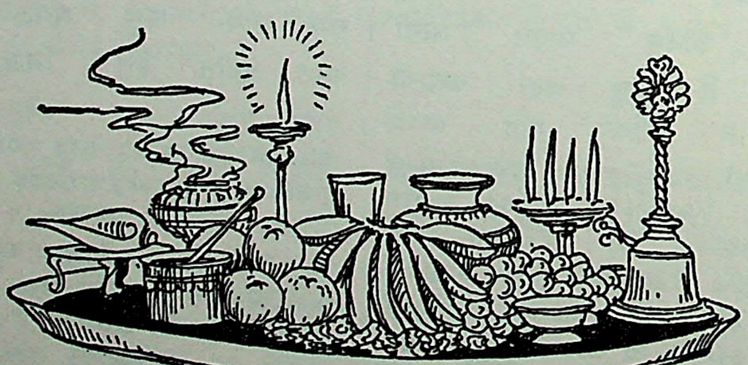
सो०—सिय रघुबीर बिबाहु जे सप्रेम गावहिं सुनहिं ।
तिन्ह कहुँ सदा उछाहु मंगलायतन राम जसु ॥ ३६१ ॥

Those who lovingly sing or hear the story of Sītā and Rāma's marriage shall ever rejoice; for Śrī Rāma's glory is an abode of felicity. (361)

[PAUSE 12 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

इति श्रीमद्रामचरितमानसे सकलकलिकलुषविध्वंसने
प्रथमः सोपानः समाप्तः ।

Thus ends the first descent into the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, that eradicates all the impurities of the Kali age.*



Editors' Apologia

In the present age (1) the *Bhagavadgītā*, or the Lord's song, and (2) the *Rāmāyaṇa*, or the story of God's advent on earth in the form of Śrī Rāma, are the two legs on which Hinduism in its various forms securely stands. The *Rāmacharitamānasa* of Goswami Tulasidas, who is traditionally believed to be an incarnation of the sage Vālmīki (the author of the *Rāmāyaṇa*), is a more or less independent adaptation of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and is even more popular with the masses in Northern India than its Sanskrit prototype, the study of which is confined only to those who are conversant with Sanskrit. The popularity of the *Gītā* and the *Rāmacharitamānasa* can be easily gauged from the fact that a single Press in a distant corner of India, like the Gita Press run by our humble organization, has in the course of a few years of its existence struck off and released over thirty-three lac copies of the *Gītā* and five lac copies of the *Rāmacharitamānasa* for the reading public and yet egregiously failed to meet the ever-growing demand for these two inimitable books. There are various editions of these books published by other Presses and publishing firms in other parts of India. If the total sale of these editions is taken into consideration, they may easily prove to be the best sellers in India even in these degenerate days, when Materialism in its most aggressive form threatens to throttle Spirituality and all that it stands for, not unoften with the backing of the State, under the false inspiration of shibboleths that raise a dust and mislead the unsuspecting public.

The readers of the 'Kalyana-Kalpataru' have been already supplied, in three preceding inaugural numbers, with an English translation of the *Bhagavadgītā* illumined by a detailed commentary on the same by Sri Jayadayal Goyandka, the saintly founder of the Gita Press. And the present number represents the first instalment of our humble attempt to present them similarly with a faithful translation of the *Rāmacharitamānasa* by the celebrated saint-poet Goswami Tulasidas, whose name is a household word throughout the length and breadth of North India. As in the case of the "Gītā-Tattva Number", it is expected the "Mānasa Number" will be completed in three years and published in three consecutive inaugural numbers. The present number contains a translation of the *Bālakāṇḍa*, which is the longest unit of the *Mānasa*. The second number of the series will contain, God willing, the Ayodhyā, Araṇya and Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍas, and the third and last number, the Sundara, Lankā and Uttara Kāṇḍas of the *Mānasa*. With humility and diffidence in our heart, and yet with great earnestness, we solicit the favour that God will give us strength and opportunity to complete this sacred undertaking and render service through this work both to our readers and to the Lord Himself.

The spiritual value of the *Mānasa* is well-known even to those men of culture and information in India, who lack direct contact and acquaintance with the productions of the Hindi literary world. The book, as its title shows, has been conceived by the poet as a lake—the Mansarovar concealed within the stony bosom of the great Himalaya—in the waters of which swans in the form of sages freely swim

and sport and spend their time in eternal bliss. In this charming lake there are four lovely ghats in the form of dialogues between (1) Bhuśuṇḍi and Garuḍa, (2) Śiva and Pārvatī, (3) Yājñavalkya and Bharadwāja, and (4) Tulasidas and other saints. The seven Books of the Mānasa (*Bālakāṇḍa, Ayodhyākāṇḍa, Araṇyakāṇḍa* etc.) are the seven flights of steps, which lead one to the unfathomable depth of the holy, nectarean water of the lake—the glory of Bhagavān Śrī Rāma and His beloved Consort, Śrī Sītā. The beautiful river Sarayu, with its source in the Mānasa lake, carrying the story of Śrī Rāma's fame, joins the heavenly stream of Devotion (Gangā) to purify the mind of souls and take them to the ocean of Bliss. This beautiful metaphorical representation, enriched with details which only an inspired poet possessed of the highest poetic gifts could bring forth from his illimitable store-house of imagination, puts in a nutshell the plan of the spiritual epic, which has become, due to its own intrinsic merit, as authoritative as a fifth Veda with many an aspiring soul, and especially with the teeming masses, in Northern India.

Goswami Tulasidas's *magnum opus* appeared on the Indian stage at a moment of history, which was as critical, if not worse, as the present day, so far as the life and continuity of Hindu religion and culture are concerned. For some centuries anterior to him, Muslim hordes coming from beyond the borders of India had overrun the country again and again, throwing everything into disorder and ransacking every nook and corner of the land for loot and plunder. After these raids fanatical Muslim rulers, whether Pathan or Moghul, who wading through blood established themselves on the royal throne in Delhi, left no stone unturned to suppress the religion and culture of the subject population. Sacred places like Brindaban, Mathura, Ayodhya and Banaras were remorselessly destroyed. Famous temples were desecrated and mostly turned into mosques; seats of Hindu learning were deliberately dispersed and the entire ecclesiastical authority of the State was used to uproot with an iron hand what was considered to be the religion of infidels. Hinduism thus lay prostrate and bleeding at the feet of Islam, helplessly waiting for the knock-out blow which was to put an end to its chequered career as a religion with a system of thought and philosophy of its own. Who was to save Hinduism from this impending doom ? Goswami Tulasidas has in his own inimitable style described an identical situation before the advent of Bhagavān Śrī Rama, when Rāvaṇa held sway over the land. The graphic picture he has drawn makes one prone to believe as if he has recorded facts taking place before his eyes in contemporary India. He writes:—

"The whole demon crew, sinful at heart and of terrible aspect, were the torment of heaven. Roaming at night, they did outrages of various kinds and assumed diverse forms through their delusive power. They acted in every way contrary to Veda and did everything in their power to eradicate religion. Wherever they found a cow or a Brahman they set fire to that city, town or village. Virtuous acts were nowhere to be seen. No one paid any respect to the gods, the Brahmans and the spiritual preceptor. There was no devotion to Śrī Hari, no sacrificial performances, no austerities and no spiritual wisdom. No one would ever dream of listening to the Vedas or the

Purāṇas. If ever any talk of Japa, Yoga, dispassion, penance or of oblations to gods in a sacrifice entered Rāvaṇa's ears, he would at once be on his feet and run to stop them. He would allow nothing of these and would destroy everything he laid his hands upon. There was such corruption in the world that no talk of piety could be heard anywhere. Whoever recited the Vedas and Purāṇas was intimidated in manifold ways and sent into exile. ......The number of villains, thieves and gamblers, and of those who coveted others' wealth and wives swelled to a great extent. People honoured not their parents and gods and exacted services from pious souls. Those who act in this way, Bhavānī, know all such creatures as demons.

"Perceiving the extreme disrespect for religion the Earth was alarmed and perturbed. 'The weight of mountains, rivers and oceans', she said to herself, 'is not so oppressive to me as of him who is malevolent to others.' She saw all goodness perverted; yet for fear of Rāvaṇa she could not utter a word. After great deliberation she took the form of a cow and went to the spot where all gods and sages were in hiding. With tears in her eyes, she told them her sufferings; but none of them could be of any help to her. The gods, sages and Gandharvas all repaired to Brahmā's abode; with them was poor Earth in the form of a cow grievously stricken with fear and grief. Brahmā came to know everything; and, realizing in his heart of hearts his inability to help her, he said, 'The Immortal Lord whose servant you are will be my help as well as yours. Have patience, Earth,' said Brahmā, 'and fix your mind on the feet of Śrī Hari. The Lord knows the distress of His servants and will put an end to your terrible suffering."

How did the gods meet such a terrible situation ? Let Goswami Tulasidas speak, again, for our enlightenment:—

"All the gods sat in counsel. 'Where can we find the Lord, so that we may appeal to Him' ? Some one suggested that they should go to Vaikuṇṭha. Another said, 'The Lord has His abode in the ocean of milk.' But Śiva said, 'The Lord always manifests Himself in response to the devotion and love one cherishes in one's heart. For aught I know Śrī Hari is present everywhere and is revealed only by Love. Tell Me any place, time or quarter of the heaven where the Lord is not.........He is revealed by love even as fire is manifested by friction.' These words of Śiva found favour with all, and Brahmā applauded Him saying, 'Well said, well said.' The hair on Brahmā's body bristled and tears flowed from his eyes. Recovering Himself, the stable-minded Brahmā joined his palms and prayed:—

"Glory, all glory to You, O Lord of immortals, O Delight of devotees, O Protector of the suppliant, O Benefactor of cows and Brahmans, O Slayer of demons, O beloved Consort of Lakṣmī, glory to You. O Guardian of gods and the earth, mysterious are Thy ways; their secret is known to none. Let Him who is benevolent by nature and compassionate to the humble show His grace. Glory, all glory to the immortal Lord Mukunda, who resides in all hearts, is supreme bliss personified, who is omnipresent, unknowable, and supersensuous, whose acts are holy and who is beyond the

veil of Māyā. Glory to Him who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss combined, who is most lovingly meditated upon day and night and whose praises are sung by multitudes of sages full of dispassion and entirely free from infatuation. Let the Slayer of the sinful Agha bestow His care on us—He who brought forth the threefold creation (the heaven, earth and the lower regions) without anyone else to assist Him. We know neither devotion nor worship. He who disperses the fear of transmigration, delights the mind of sages and puts an end to hosts of calamities, we gods betake ourselves to Him in thought, word and deed, giving up our wonted cleverness. The Lord who is known neither to Śāradā nor to the Vedas, nor again to Śeṣa, nor to anyone of the sages, who, as the Vedas proclaim, loves the lowly, let Him be moved to pity. The sages, Siddhas and all gods, grievously stricken with fear, bow at the lotus feet of the Lord who serves as Mount Mandara for churning the ocean of worldly existence, who is charming in every way and who is an abode of virtues and an embodiment of bliss."

"Knowing that the gods and Earth were terror-stricken and hearing their loving entreaties, a deep voice came from heaven, which removed all their doubt and anxiety. 'Fear not, O sages, Siddhas and Indra; for your sake, I will assume the form of a human being. In the glorious solar race I shall be born along with My part manifestations.' "

This is the secret of the Lord's manifestation on earth as Bhagavan Śri Rama, the hero of the Epic *Mānasa*. "For the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of the evil-doers, and for establishing Dharma on a firm footing, I am born from age to age," said the Lord in the *Bhagavadgītā* (IV. 8).

As in Goswami Tulasidas's days, even so today Religion has fallen on evil days, and is again stricken and downtrodden. It is being assailed from all sides through insidious and alluring propaganda by the forces of Materialism, which in its most aggressive form has bodied itself forth as the spectre of Communism. The moral of the above story given by Sri Tulasidas points out the sovereign remedy, which is as infallible and true today as it was in ages past. It brings a message of hope to all believers and assures them that through God's intervention, if sincerely sought, even the darkest clouds roll away.

We need not enter into the poetic qualities of the *Mānasa* and the fineness of the technique used by Sri Goswamiji in the production of his powerful Epic, viz., the exact appropriateness of the Chaupāis, Soraṭhās and Chhandas to express the very emotion they are intended to do, the rise and fall of the various rhythms and cadences in response to emotion, the manifestation of the different Rasas to produce the right emotional and spiritual effect, the powerful characterization of the subjects taken up for delineation, or the flow of words resembling almost the natural flow of a limpid stream. These are qualities which would be marked by any thoughtful and qualified reader, who even casually goes into a study of the original book. Nor need we enter, on this occasion, into a discussion of the different sentiments of Devotion, and how

they have been dealt with by Sri Goswamiji. For these are subjects which are endlessly discussed by lovers of the Epic, who never grow tired of diving deep into its spiritual and poetical niceties. It is, however, incumbent on us to draw the attention of the reader to the cultural importance of the book because of its topical interest at the present juncture. And this interest has specially grown and has naturally assumed an added significance since the attainment of political freedom by the country. Has Bhārata a distinct culture and civilization of her own, which when properly developed will present an objective ideal that will go to enrich world-culture? Or, has she no cultural past worth the name except what may be called relics of ancient barbarism, which should be unceremoniously thrown into the scrap-heap in order to enable her to write upon a clean slate and strut on the world-stage as the proud possessor of a third-rate or fourth-rate imitation of Anglo-Islamic culture? This question of the purest picture of Bhārata's distinctive culture and civilization is bound to come to the forefront of national consciousness sooner or later, when in course of time she rediscovers her lost soul after shedding the badges of her political serfdom under centuries of domination of Islamic and English rule. Men who are saturated with an out and out international outlook very often try to impress on us the danger of developing narrow exclusiveness, which may cut us off from the developments of the external world. In their zeal for internationalism they fail to recognize the danger of blindly imitating other cultures while losing the priceless heritages of our own, and to assess with an impartial mind the true worth and value of the ideals which inspire the culture and civilization of other lands as compared to that of ours. Goswami Tulasidas's *Mānasa* possesses a special intrinsic value to us of the present generation inasmuch as it presents us with a brilliant picture of society as it obtained in ancient Bhārata untouched by any other extraneous influences. This picture covers practically all the strata of society, from the highest to the lowest, thus bringing in bold relief the total culture and the exact type of civilization prevailing in this ancient land. Spotlights on the royal courts of Ayodhyā, Mithilā and Lankā, descriptions of the hermitages where the intellectual and spiritual life of the people were given free scope to shape themselves under the care and supervision of expert teachers, the state of society in cities and villages, the abundance of wealth and freedom from care, sweetness of relation between the high and the low, the highest form of conjugal fidelity, the modesty, devotion and virtue of women in general, the chivalry of the heroes, brotherly affection expressed through self-abnegation of the highest type, standards of courtesy in relationship with father, mother, teacher, friend and devoted servant, the state of law and order in society, kingly duties and their proper execution, the general state of honesty and virtue in society, the function of sages like Vasiṣṭha, Viśwāmitra, Agastya, Sutīkṣṇa and Śatānanda, their universal moral influence over all strata of society beginning with the royal court and ending with the humblest citizen of the State, the ideal of Rāmarājya, which brought universal peace and contentment—these are some features of the Epic which should be carefully studied by us for an impartial verdict on the

respective merits of ancient and modern society. Lastly, the personality of Bhagavān Śrī Rāmachandra, portrayed by Sri Tulasidas as the Ideal Man of Perfect Propriety, should be the subject of our careful scrutiny and critical understanding for our own good as well as for the good of the world.

There is a world of difference between the Hero and Heroine of the *Mānasa*, Bhagavān Śrī Rama and the Universal Mother, Sītā, and the heroes and heroines of the celebrated Epics of the Western world, portrayed by the great poets of Western antiquity like Homer and Virgil, whose masterpieces, the *Illiad*, Oddessey and the Aeniad, provide perennial inspiration to European thought, poetry, culture and civilization. A comparison between the character of Sītā, on the one hand, and that of Helen, on the other, will bring out this difference in clear and bold relief. Such fundamental and outstanding difference marks off Bhāratīya culture from that of the West and lays the demarcating line between the two. When Bharata rediscovers her lost soul, she is bound, more and more, to rally round the ideals which are the special heritage of her own culture.

In connection with this discussion on the Hero of the *Mānasa*, we desire to point out that though Śrī Rama has been portrayed by the Epic as the perfect Man, it has emphasized time and again that this was an advent of the Lord Himself on earth for the 'protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for the establishment of righteousness on a firm footing', in terms of the definition of the *Gītā* as the purpose and motive of the Lord for His descent on earth. Thus Śrī Rāma does not represent what some modern thinkers contend is the highest expression of the evolutionary human soul in the process of the soul's ascent towards divinity; on the contrary, He is the very divinity embodied as a Person, who as an act of grace has gone through the reverse process of Descent to manifest Himself on the suffering Earth in order to remove its distress. The ascent of the human soul towards divinity and the descent of God on earth should, therefore, be regarded as two distinct processes in the realm of the spirit, and not two different names of the same phenomenon. The theory of the descent of God on earth as an Avatāra is a distinctive theory of Hinduism without any parallel in any other religion. This should in no case be confounded and treated on a par with the process of evolutionary progress of the individual soul, known as the process of Ascent towards divinity. The fact of His Descent on earth as Avatāra has been authoritatively laid down by the Lord in the *Gītā* in very clear terms, making the question thus a fundamental and organic doctrine of Hinduism. Says the Lord in the *Gītā*:—

> "Though unborn and immortal and also the Lord of all beings, I manifest Myself through My own Yogamāya, keeping My Nature under control. Whenever there is decline of righteousness, and unrighteousness is in the ascendant, then, Arjuna, I body Myself forth. For the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for establishing Dharma on a firm footing, I am born from age to age. My birth and activities are divine. He who knows this in reality, Arjuna, does not take birth again on leaving his body, but attains Me."

(*Gītā* IV. 6-9).

Readers of the *Kalyana-Kalpataru* must be aware that Hindi in Devanagari script has been officially recognized as the future State language of Bhārata, and as such a knowledge of Hindi will be in the near future an indispensable qualification for every cultured citizen of the State. From this point of view, the present publication containing the original text with English translation of the greatest masterpiece in the Hindi language will, we hope, be of great use to those of our readers who belong to the non-Hindi-speaking parts of the country. A study of the *Mānasa* with the help of this translation will bring them, not only spiritual enlightenment and peace and solace of the heart through contact with the spirit of Devotion, but perfect knowledge of Hindi as well. Inasmuch as the book is an inspired one, its daily reading and recitation is considered to be highly efficacious from the spiritual point of view. Many an aspiring soul in this world reached the highest aim of their life through the devoted practice of this discipline alone. Those who take to the discipline on special occasions complete the recitation of the whole *Mānasa* in the course of twenty-four hours of the day and night. Some complete the recitation in the course of nine days, and some carry it on daily in smaller instalments and complete the reading of the entire book in the course of a month. For the convenience of all such practicants, there are fixed portions of the book where they should pause in the course of their daily practice, and these have been duly marked in the present publication. We trust spiritually-minded readers will take proper advantage of these directions and make the best use of them for their spiritual benefit. It is superfluous on our part to write anything more in praise of the incomparable *Mānasa*, which has shed its light on this gross earth without break for the last three centuries and more and has grown in lustre and glory from day to day. It is, indeed, a proud privilege on our part to be able to present this English translation to our readers, whose defects are well-known to us because of our own deficiency of knowledge of the English tongue. We, therefore, humbly request our readers to attribute all the shortcomings of the publication to our own ignorance and absence of experience, and give the credit for whatever there is worthy in it to the greatness of the author himself, the saint-poet Goswami Tulasidas. In the preparation of this translation we naturally derived much benefit and help from the pioneer work of the late Mr. F. S. Growse, the first translator of the *Mānasa* into the English language, to whom we express our deep indebtedness and obligation. Similarly, we are beholden to the members of our editorial staff and some other learned friends for their ungrudging assistance and valuable suggestions. We forbear to mention them particularly by name for fear of giving offence, because they belong to an intimate circle and did their work in a religious spirit, without any hope of return in any shape or form; but we feel we shall be wanting in duty if we do not at least mentally offer them our acknowledgments and express our sense of gratitude to them for what they have done towards the publication of the present inaugural number. May Śrī Rāma, the presiding Deity of the *Mānasa*, cast His benign look on us and purify us, and elevate our soul: such is our humble prayer.



रामायण द्रुमं नौमि रामरक्षा नवांकुरम् ।
गायत्री बीज वम्नाय मूलं मोक्ष महाफलम् ॥

Lakshmibilas Press Ltd., Cal.

ॐ

Kalyana-Kalpataru

The Manasa Number—II

August 1950

Contents

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

Descent II

(Ayodhyākāṇḍa)

*

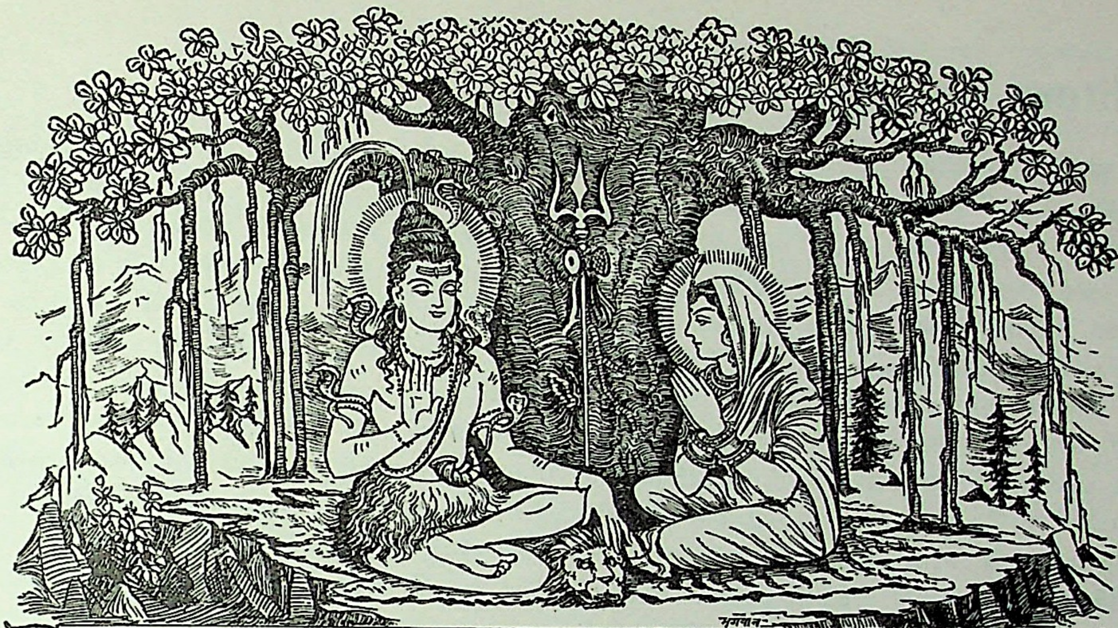
Descent III

(Araṇyakāṇḍa)

Descent IV

(Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa)

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA KALPATARU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā* VI. 30)

Vol. XVI]   August 1950   [No. 1

त्यक्त्वा सुदुस्त्यजसुरेप्सितराज्यलक्ष्मीं
धर्मिष्ठ आर्यवचसा यदगादरण्यम् ।
मायामृगं दयितयेप्सितमन्वधावद्
वन्दे महापुरुष ते चरणारविन्दम् ॥

—*Srīmad Bhāgavata*

"I adore, O most pious Supreme Person, Your lotus feet, that wended their way to the forest under the command of Your father (King Dasaratha), kicking the royal splendours most difficult to spurn and coveted even by gods, but chased the false deer because Your beloved Spouse longed to have it !"

Editors' Apologia

We have great pleasure in presenting to our kind readers the second volume of the "Manasa Number," which, as will be seen, contains a translation of the second, third and fourth books of *Śrī Rāmacharitamānasa,* popularly known by the names of *Ayodhyākāṇḍa*, *Araṇyakāṇḍa* and *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*—names adopted from the great Sanskrit work of the sage Vālmiki. The *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* mainly concerns itself with the scenes enacted at Ayodhyā after the wedding of the four princes,—the intrigue in the Court of King Daśaratha, which led to the banishment of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and the death of the king himself, the refusal of Bharata to accept the throne and his efforts to bring back Śrī Rāma from the forest and his ultimately staying at Nandigrāma in deference to his elder brother's wishes and carrying on the administration of the state as an humble servant of the Lord, scrupulously abstaining from every form of pleasure and leading a life of rigid austerity, which put to shame the greatest of recluses and hermits. The third book, *Araṇyakāṇḍa,* portrays the wanderings of the Lord in the forest, His vow to rid the earth of the demon race,—who under the leadership of the most powerful king of Lankā was engaged in its nefarious activities of uprooting religion, killing and devouring the Ṛṣis and hermits and obstructing the practice of austerities and performance of sacrifices—and thus to accomplish one of the principal aims of His descent on earth, a cause for which He had courted and accepted a life of complete self-abnegation and asceticism in the prime of His youth and exposed Himself to all the risks and privations of a forest life; His grace on many a sage, ascetic and devotee who had cherished a lifelong desire to see Him and reap the highest reward of their eyes and existence; the extermination and deliverance of Ravaṇa's own brothers—Khara, Dūṣaṇa and Trisirā and their powerful host, and finally the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa. The fourth and last book comprised in this volume, as its very name signifies, centres round the events at and about Kiṣkindhā—His meeting with Hanumān, the greatest of His devotees and servants (who plays a predominant part in the subsequent drama of rescuing Sītā and conquering the demon king); His alliance and friendship with Sugrīva, the younger brother of Vālī (the mighty sovereign of Kiṣkindhā), who had persecuted and exiled him; Sugrīva's promise to help Śrī Rāma in recovering His lost Spouse and Śrī Rāma's vow to kill Sugrīva's invincible brother and bestow on him the throne of Kiṣkindhā; the deliverance of Vālī and the Lord's grace on his wife (Tārā) and son (Angada); the coronation of Sugrīva and his sending troops of monkeys in all directions to trace the whereabouts of Sītā; the Lord's special instructions to Hanumān, who with Jāmbavān, Nala and Angada led the party sent to the south, and their meeting with Sampātī, who told them the whereabouts of Sītā as well as the way to reach Her; and lastly Hanumān's determination to leap across the ocean and

bring the news of Janaka's Daughter.

Apart from the high religious and spiritual value attaching to the recitation, hearing, exposition and study of this sacred story, which—as pointed out in unmistakable terms by the poet himself at the end of each book—is attended with the highest results, the poem is full of lessons most valuable both from the worldly and the spiritual points of view. All the principal characters figuring in the narrative are embodiments of ideal virtues and can easily serve as models for humanity. India has always been known for its love of truth. People in this land—where corruption and bribery, black-marketing and adulteration of food articles are rampant today—have sacrificed their all for the sake of truth and have preferred death to breach of faith. The ideal of King Daśaratha seems to have been forgotten by us all and requires to be inculcated upon our mind more than ever. "A pledge must be redeemed even at the cost of one's life" (प्रान जाहुँ बरु बचनु न जाई) was the maxim he followed. The king knew that Bharata would never accept the throne and that Kaikeyī's mischievous plans would not succeed. He also earned the lasting stigma of being a slave of his passions and an uxorious husband, and even prayed inwardly to God Śiva that Śrī Rāma might rebel against him and openly defy his orders. Nay, in the excess of his love, he tried every means to detain Him; yet he never went back upon his word and with a stony heart saw his most beloved sons and daughter-in-law—the sons whom he had once declined to send even with the sage Viśwāmitra—depart to the woods in hermits' dress before his very eyes. His attachment to them, however, proved too strong for him and he immortalized himself by succumbing to the anguish of separation from his beloved Rāma. He thus exemplified in himself the highest ideal of a lover—the ideal of a fish, that dies immediately it is taken out of water. All glory to King Daśaratha, who stands unequalled in his love for truth as well as in his love for Śrī Rāma !

Śrī Rāma, the divine hero of this poem, is the Ideal Man,—the Man *par excellence* (Maryādā-Puruṣottama), of the Hindus. He embodies in Himself all the virtues which go to make a man perfect. He is an ideal brother, an ideal son, an ideal husband, an ideal friend. He is perfect in every way. He loves His brothers as His own self. On the eve of His installation to the throne of Ayodhyā auspicious omens manifest themselves on His sacred person. These take His thoughts at once to His beloved brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna, who had been away with their mother's parents, and prognosticate to Him their arrival. No other event could be happier to Him. Far from being pleased at the prospect of being installed as the Regent-Prince of Ayodhyā, He feels disturbed at the news, when the same is broken to Him by His preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha). The very idea that He should rule over the kingdom and that His brothers should serve Him as His dependants is revolting to Him. That is why when mother Kaikeyī tells Him in the presence of His father about the two boons she had asked of him, He welcomes the idea rather than feel perturbed over it. He thus illustrates in His life the maxim of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*: 'न प्रहृष्येत् प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत् प्राप्य चाप्रियम्' (one should neither exult on obtaining what is

agreeable nor feel perturbed on meeting with the unpleasant). It is this unique trait of His character that we find praised in the following invocation occurring at the very beginning of the *Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa*:—

> प्रसन्नतां या न गताभिषेकत-
> स्तथा न मम्ले वनवासदुःखतः ।
> मुखाम्बुजश्री रघुनन्दनस्य मे
> सदास्तु सा मञ्जुलमङ्गलप्रदा ॥

"May the splendour of Śrī Rāma's lotus face, which neither grew brighter at the prospect of His being installed on the throne of Ayodhyā nor was dimmed by the painful experience of exile in the woods, ever bring felicity to me !"

Self-denial is the key-note of Hindu culture. Self-abnegation is the touch-stone of real greatness in the eyes of a Hindu. It is self-denial which accords a Brahman the highest place in the social scale and makes the greatest emperor bow his head to him; it is renunciation which makes the Sannyāsī an object of reverence to every householder. Self-denial is the alpha and omega of a Hindu's life. It is self-denial again which has made Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Śankara and Chaitanya names to conjure with to a Hindu. A mere hint from His stepmother is enough for Śrī Rāma to induce Him not only to waive His rightful claim to a mighty empire but spurn all the amenities of city life and comforts of the palace. Far from resenting the behaviour of or harbouring the least ill-will towards mother Kaikeyī, who was instrumental in depriving Him of His birthright and sending Him into exile, He exults over the prospect of meeting hermits and recluses in the forest and congratulates Himself on His being enabled to carry out the behest of His father and the wishes of His stepmother. Nay, He is supremely happy to think that the sovereignty of Ayodhyā will go to Bharata, who was dearer to Him than His own life. He takes it as a piece of good-luck and without seeking any confirmation from His father most gladly takes leave of him and prepares for the eventful journey. In this way He discharged His obligation not only to His father and stepmother but to His younger brother, Bharata, as well and proved Himself to be an ideal son and an ideal brother.

Śrī Rāma was most tender-hearted and compassionate by nature and had the greatest regard for others' feelings and susceptibilities. He dissuades Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa to the best of His ability from following Him and advises them to stay at home and serve and comfort the sorrowing king and the afflicted queen-mothers; but when He finds that they are not going to stay and that they will hardly survive if compelled, He gladly allows them both to accompany Him. After comforting His father and mother and taking leave of them as He issues out of the palace on His way to the forest He finds a large crowd of men and women waiting at Vasiṣṭha's door to catch His last glimpse, and consoles them all with soothing words. He calls the Brahmans and bestows gifts on them, gratifies the mendicants and sates His friends with pure love. He entrusts His men-servants and maid-servants to the care of His Guru and requests all who were present there to do their level best during His absence to cheer up His parents and to see that they do not feel the pangs of separation from Him. Although He had no mind to use any

conveyance in His journey to the forest He could not decline the loving offer of Sumantra (who had been sent by His father and for whom He had the same regard as for His father) to give them a lift to some distance. But a large crowd of citizens followed in their wake and would not return in spite of His persistent remonstrances. At last He hits upon a plan. As the people lay buried in sleep on the bank of the Tamasā river (where the Lord had made His very first halt) He slips past them asking the charioteer (Sumantra) to confuse the tracks by driving now in one direction and now in another, and thus saves the people from further toil and hardship.

While ferrying across the Gangā at Śṛngaverapura He dismissed Sumantra with much consolation and a loving message to His parents. Here Lakṣmaṇa interposed some caustic remarks; but the Lord adjures Sumantra by His own life to make no mention of Lakṣmaṇa's childishness to His father. While meeting His mothers at Chitrakūṭa He sees Kaikeyī first of all and eases her mind by kind and soothing words and throwing the whole blame at the door of an adverse fate. He meets Sumitrā (Lakṣmaṇa's mother) next and throws Himself at the feet of His own mother (Kausalyā) last of all. Nay, He adores the feet of His Guru, His Guru's wife and other Brahman ladies even before His mothers and thus fully respects the injunctions of the Śāstras. When Bharata and other people had passed a couple of days in the forest, Śrī Rāma grows anxious on their account and cannot bear to see them living on mere fruits, bulbs and roots and lying in the open air on leaves and grass, although He had been doing the same thing for many days past. Nay, when the sage Vasiṣṭha approaches Him at Chitrakūṭa and seeks His advice as to what should be done, He feels abashed and leaves the whole thing to his discretion and to the discretion of Bharata, thus showing His utmost consideration for His Guru and His younger brother. From this it will be clear that even though He was adamant in His resolution to redeem the pledge given by His father to Kaikeyī, He was no less responsive to finer susceptibilities. He was prompted by similar considerations in presenting His sandals to Bharata later on (when the latter agrees on his own initiative to return to Ayodhyā and carry on the administration on His behalf) even in the presence of elders like the sage Vasiṣṭha and King Janaka, which He would not have otherwise done. These seemingly contradictory traits of His character are fully brought out in the following verse of the renowned Sanskrit dramatist Bhavabhūti:—

वज्रादपि कठोराणि मृदूनि कुसुमादपि ।
लोकोत्तराणां चेतांसि को नु विज्ञातुमर्हति ॥

"The hearts of supermen are harder than adamant and yet softer than a flower; who can ever know them ?"

A survey of this volume will be incomplete without a reference, however passing it may be, to other characters,—particularly to Bharata and Lakṣmaṇa among the males and to Sītā, Kausalyā and Sumitrā among the ladies. To quote the words of the poet himself, Bharata is an embodiment of true love for Śrī Rāma. His life is a life of complete renunciation and surrender to the will of the Lord. That is why he is recognized as a model of Dāsya-Bhakti. His renuncia-

tion was even greater than that of Śrī Rāma. The very thought of Śrī Rāma's exile was repugnant to him and he did all he could to persuade Śrī Rāma to return to Ayodhyā and enjoy His birthright. But when he comes to know Śrī Rāma's pleasure, he unquestioningly and readily submits to His will and returns to Ayodhyā. Nobody would have been more pleased than he, had Śrī Rāma returned to Ayodhyā and accepted the crown; but he forwent his own pleasure for the sake of Śrī Rāma's. In the words of Devarṣi Narada, the great exponent of the philosophy of love, the criterion of true love is 'तत्सुखे सुखित्वम्', to merge one's own pleasure in the pleasure of one's beloved—and this maxim is fully illustrated in Bharata's life. It is this absolute surrender to the will of his Master and his uncompromising love for the latter's person has endeared him to the Lord and made him an object of reverence and envy even to sages like Bharadwāja and Vasiṣṭha and to repositories of wisdom like King Janaka. We cannot conclude this poor estimate of Bharata's greatness any better than by quoting Janaka's words, uttered not in a formal address to an open assembly but in the course of a private and confidential talk with his own consort. Says Janaka: "But the mutual affection and confidence of Bharata and Śrī Rāma are beyond one's conception. Although Śrī Rāma is the highest example of even-mindedness, Bharata is the *perfection of love and attachment*. Bharata has never bestowed any thought on his spiritual or worldly interests or personal comforts. Devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet is at once the means and the end: to my mind this appears to sum up Bharata's creed."

Lakṣmaṇa's life is another illustrious example of thorough-going resignation and unreserved dedication to the Lord. As soon as he hears that the Lord is proceeding to the woods he makes up his mind to accompany Him and having secured the Lord's permission follows Him like a shadow throughout His wanderings, caring little for his own comforts and spurning alike the love of his parents and young bride. This shows his exclusive and unflinching devotion to the Lord's feet. While Bharata stays behind in submission to the Lord's wishes and does His work at Ayodhyā, Lakṣmaṇa has the good fortune to serve Him personally and does everything to make the forest life of His brother and sister-in-law as comfortable as possible. He gathers fruits and flowers for them, prepares their bed of leaves, kneads His brother's feet when He lies down to repose and keeps vigil at night, bow and arrow in hand, when they are asleep. He shows the greatest respect to them and is always at their beck and call like a humble servant, completely merging his identity in them. He cannot brook the least insult or injury to Śrī Rāma from any quarter whatsoever and would not spare even his aged father and a noble brother like Bharata when he suspects that He is being wronged by them. Thus he stands unequalled in his love and devotion to Śrī Rāma.

Sītā is the Lord's own Divine Energy. She is the perfection of all feminine virtues and the highest ideal of Indian womanhood. The very idea of separation from Her Lord is unbearable to Her and no amount of persuasion and argument can deter Her from Her resolve to accompany Śrī Rāma to the woods. Though

extremely delicate of body She cheerfully endures all the hardships of a forest life and deems it Her good fortune to be able to serve Her lord during His exile. She has the same respect for all Her mothers-in-law and bears no grudge to Kaikeyī. She never complains to Her lord of any inconvenience to Her and does not stay in the camp of Her parents at Chitrakūṭa even for one night for fear of being deprived of the Lord's service. Her fidelity, as will be seen in the Sundara and Lankā-Kāṇḍas, is put to a severe test in Lankā, where She fearlessly resists all the blandishments and threats of the mighty demon and disdainfully spurns his advances. This in brief sums up the glory of Mother Jānakī, which cannot be adequately described even by the thousand-headed serpent-god and the goddess of learning.

Queen Kausalyā is the greatest of Indian mothers. She was extremely devoted to her husband and loved her co-wives as her own sisters. Although Kaikeyī's mind was poisoned against her by her wicked servant-maid, Kausalyā never harboured any ill-feeling towards her co-wife and attributed all her misfortune to the freaks of an adverse fate. When she learns from Sumantra's son the circumstances under which Śrī Rāma was thinking of proceeding to the forest, she is inclined at first to detain Him; but her sense of duty eventually prevails over her affection and she allows her only child to go. She quickly realizes that if she detained Śrī Rāma He would incur the sin of disobeying His father and displeasing His stepmother and bad blood would be created between Him and Bharata, whom she loved as dearly as Śrī Rāma. In this way she acts with great forbearance and foresight and averts a grave crisis. Nay, while she does not mind her own sorrow, which is too deep for words, she feels much concerned about Bharata and fears that he may not be able to bear his separation from Śrī Rāma. This shows how much she loved her stepson. She even persuades Bharata with her whole heart to accept the throne of Ayodhyā after the demise of his father, a thing which no other stepmother could have done. All this, however, should cause no wonder when it is remembered that she was the blessed mother of Śrī Rāma, an honour and privilege which is coveted even by gods.

Sumitrā's role is even greater than that of Kausalyā. She is one of those few blessed mothers who have dedicated their children to the service of the Lord or His devotees. Those who have carefully read the Bālakāṇḍa need not be told that Sumitrā owed her twin-born sons—Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna—to the goodwill of Kausalyā and Kaikeyī and she returned their goodwill by dedicating both her children—the elder to the service of Kausalyā's son and the younger to Kaikeyī's. That is why when Lakṣmaṇa approaches her to ask her leave to accompany Śrī Rāma and Sītā to the forest, she asks him of her own accord to do so and congratulates him as well as herself on the unique opportunity afforded him by Providence to serve his Brother and Sister-in-law. The following words uttered by her on that occasion should be remembered by each and every mother:—

पुत्रवती जुबती जग सोई ।
रघुबर भगत जासु सुतु होई ॥
नतरु बाँझ भलि बादि बिआनी ।
राम बिमुख सुत तें हित जानी ॥

"That woman alone can be said to have borne a male issue, whose son is a devotee of Rāma (the Lord of Raghus). Otherwise she had better remain barren; for she who deems herself fortunate in having a son hostile to Rāma has *yeaned* in vain (*i. e.*, has given birth only to a brute)."

We shall be failing in our duty if we leave out mother Kaikeyī from this short resumé. Although she has been much maligned by all and has not been spared by our poet himself, it will be seen that Kaikeyī was next to none in her love for Śrī Rāma and was a great favourite with the Lord, who used her as His own instrument and allotted her a most thankless part which has earned her undying obloquy and tarnished her fair name for all time to come. Just as Bharata chose to remain at Ayodhyā to accomplish the Lord's will and manfully bore the anguish of separation from Him, Kaikeyī too courted lasting infamy and served the cause of her beloved Rāma by accepting the heartless role of an instrument in securing His exile. Had Kaikeyī not come forward to play this cruel role, the mission of Śrī Rāma's descent on earth would have remained incomplete. According to the *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa*, (*Ayodhyākāṇḍa* IX, 55-64) when Kaikeyī meets Śrī Rāma at Chitrakūṭa the Lord confides to her this secret and eases her mind. Even as the mother who gave birth to a son like Bharata, she claims our greatest adoration and homage and we close this humble review by bowing at her revered feet. There are many more characters which deserve to be remembered in this connection; but space forbids us to refer to them and we content ourselves by mentally bowing our heads to them. A portrayal of the character of Hanumān has been reserved for the last part of the "Manasa Number" as the same has been brought out more fully in the subsequent Kāṇḍas.

Before we take leave of our kind readers we shall be found guilty of a serious omission if we fail to acknowledge with a grateful heart the valuable help and assistance received by us in so many ways from our esteemed and beloved friends and colleagues on the editorial staff, without whose ungrudging and unstinted co-operation we would not have been able to bring out this volume. We refrain, however, from mentioning their names individually for fear of incurring their displeasure, since the ties that bind them to us hardly leave any room for such formality. In the end we appeal to our benevolent readers to view our humble attempt with indulgence and forgive us the many faults from which it will be found to suffer. We are fully alive to our limitations and find ourselves wholly unequal to the task of rendering into English the masterly work of Goswami Tulasīdāsa, who, apart from being a great devotee and saint, ranks topmost among the Hindi poets. We have, however, the supreme consolation of having been closely associated with his thoughts and deem ourselves exceedingly fortunate in having been afforded an opportunity for all these months to dwell on the all-holy exploits of the Lord, to whose blessed feet we offer our humble undertaking with a timid though grateful heart.

ॐ

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

Descent Two

(Ayodhya-Kanda)

श्लोक

यस्याङ्के च विभाति भूधरसुता देवापगा मस्तके
भाले बालविधुर्गले च गरलं यस्योरसि व्यालराट्।
सोऽयं भूतिविभूषणः सुरवरः सर्वाधिपः सर्वदा
शर्वः सर्वगतः शिवः शशिनिभः श्रीशङ्करः पातु माम्॥ १ ॥

May He in whose lap shines forth the Daughter of the mountain-king, who carries the celestial stream on His head, on whose brow rests the crescent moon, whose throat holds poison and whose breast is the support of a huge serpent, and who is adorned by the ashes on His body, may that Chief of gods, the Lord of all, the Destroyer of the universe, the omnipresent Śiva, the moon-like Śankara, ever protect me. (1)

प्रसन्नतां या न गताभिषेकतस्तथा न मम्ले वनवासदुःखतः।
मुखाम्बुजश्री रघुनन्दनस्य मे सदास्तु सा मञ्जुलमङ्गलप्रदा॥ २ ॥

May the splendour of Śrī Rāma's lotus-like face, which neither grew brighter at the prospect of His being installed on the throne of Ayodhyā nor was dimmed by the painful experience of exile in the woods, ever bring sweet felicity to me. (2)

नीलाम्बुजश्यामलकोमलाङ्गं सीतासमारोपितवामभागम्।
पाणौ महासायकचारुचापं नमामि रामं रघुवंशनाथम्॥ ३ ॥

I adore Śrī Rāma, the Lord of Raghu's race, whose limbs are as dark and soft as a blue lotus, who has Sītā enthroned on His left side and who holds in His hands a mighty arrow and a graceful bow. (3)

दो०—श्रीगुरु चरन सरोज रज निज मनु मुकुरु सुधारि।
बरनउँ रघुबर बिमल जसु जो दायकु फल चारि॥

Cleansing the mirror of my mind with the dust from the lotus feet of the revered Guru, I sing Śrī Rāma's untarnished glory, that bestows the four rewards of human life.

चौ०—जब तें रामु ब्याहि घर आए । नित नव मंगल मोद बधाए ॥
भुवन चारिदस भूधर भारी । सुकृत मेघ बरषहिं सुख बारी ॥ १ ॥
रिधि सिधि संपति नदीं सुहाई । उमगि अवध अंबुधि कहुँ आई ॥
मनिगन पुर नर नारि सुजाती । सुचि अमोल सुंदर सब भाँती ॥ २ ॥
कहि न जाइ कछु नगर बिभूती । जनु एतनिअ बिरंचि करतूती ॥
सब बिधि सब पुर लोग सुखारी । रामचंद मुख चंदु निहारी ॥ ३ ॥
मुदित मातु सब सखीं सहेली । फलित बिलोकि मनोरथ बेली ॥
राम रूपु गुन सीलु सुभाऊ । प्रमुदित होइ देखि सुनि राऊ ॥ ४ ॥

From the day Śrī Rāma returned home duly married, there was new festivity and jubilant music every day. The fourteen spheres were like huge mountains on which clouds in the shape of meritorious deeds poured showers of joy. The water thus discharged formed into gorgeous rivers of affluence, success and prosperity, that rose in spate and flowed into the ocean of Ayodhyā. The men and women of the city were like jewels of a fine quality, bright, priceless and charming in every way. The splendour of the capital was beyond description; it seemed as if the Creator's workmanship had been exhausted there. Gazing on the moon-like face of Śrī Rāmachandra the citizens were all happy in every way. All the mothers with their companions and maids were delighted to see the creeper of their heart's desire bear fruit. The king was particularly enraptured when he saw or heard of Śrī Rāma's beauty, goodness, amiability and genial disposition. (1—4)

दो०—सब कें उर अभिलाषु अस कहहिं मनाइ महेसु ।
आप अछत जुबराज पद रामहि देउ नरेसु ॥ १ ॥

All cherished in their heart a common desire and said in their prayer to the great Lord Śiva, "Would that the king in his own life-time appointed Śrī Rāma as his regent." (1)

चौ०—एक समय सब सहित समाजा । राजसभाँ रघुराजु बिराजा ॥
सकल सुकृत मूरति नरनाहू । राम सुजसु सुनि अतिहि उछाहू ॥ १ ॥
नृप सब रहहिं कृपा अभिलाषें । लोकप करहिं प्रीति रुख राखें ॥
तिभुवन तीनि काल जग माहीं । भूरिभाग दसरथ सम नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
मंगलमूल रामु सुत जासू । जो कछु कहिअ थोर सबु तासू ॥
रायँ सुभायँ मुकुरु कर लीन्हा । बदनु बिलोकि मुकुटु सम कीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
श्रवन समीप भए सित केसा । मनहुँ जरठपनु अस उपदेसा ॥
नृप जुबराजु राम कहुँ देहू । जीवन जनम लाहु किन लेहू ॥ ४ ॥

One day the Chief of Raghus sat with all his court in the state assembly hall. Himself the embodiment of all virtues, the king was overjoyed to

hear of Śrī Rāma's fair renown. Every monarch solicited his favour, and the very guardians of the world cultivated his friendship while respecting his wishes. In all the three spheres of the universe and in all time—past, present or future—none could be found so abundantly blessed as Daśaratha. Of him who had for his son Rāma, the root of all bliss, whatever might be said would fall short of the truth. The king casually took a mirror in his hand and, looking at his face in the mirror, set his crown straight. The hair beside his ears had turned grey; it seemed as if old age were whispering into his ears, "O king, make Rāma your regent and thereby realize the object of your life and birth in this world." (1–4)

दो०—यह बिचारु उर आनि नृप सुदिनु सुअवसरु पाइ।
प्रेम पुलकि तन मुदित मन गुरहि सुनायउ जाइ॥ २॥

Entertaining this idea in his mind and finding an auspicious day and a suitable opportunity the king communicated it to his Guru (Vasiṣṭha) with his body thrilling over with emotion and his mind filled with rapture. (2)

चौ०—कहइ भुआलु सुनिअ मुनिनायक। भए राम सब बिधि सब लायक॥
सेवक सचिव सकल पुरबासी। जे हमारे अरि मित्र उदासी॥ १॥
सबहि रामु प्रिय जेहि बिधि मोही। प्रभु असीस जनु तनु धरि सोही॥
बिप्र सहित परिवार गोसाईं। करहिं छोहु सब रौरिहि नाईं॥ २॥
जे गुर चरन रेनु सिर धरहीं। ते जनु सकल बिभव बस करहीं॥
मोहि सम यहु अनुभयउ न दूजें। सबु पायउँ रज पावनि पूजें॥ ३॥
अब अभिलाषु एकु मन मोरें। पूजिहि नाथ अनुग्रह तोरें॥
मुनि प्रसन्न लखि सहज सनेहू। कहेउ नरेस रजायसु देहू॥ ४॥

Said the king, "Listen, O chief of sages: Rāma is now accomplished in every way. Servants and ministers, nay, all the people of the city and others who are either my enemies or friends or neutrals hold Rāma as dear as I do. It seems your benediction itself has incarnated in his lovely form. What more, my lord, all the Brahmans and their families cherish the same love for him as you do. Those who place on their head the dust from the Guru's feet acquire mastery as it were over all fortune. No one has realized it as I have done; I have obtained everything by adoring the holy dust from your feet. Now there remains only one longing in my heart and that too will be realized by your grace, my lord." The sage was delighted to perceive his artless devotion and said, "O king, give me your commands. (1–4)

दो०—राजन राउर नामु जसु सब अभिमत दातार।
फल अनुगामी महिप मनि मन अभिलाषु तुम्हार॥ ३॥

"O king, your very name and glory grant all one's desires. The object of your heart's desire, O jewel of monarchs, is accomplished even before you entertain the desire." (3)

चौ०—सब बिधि गुरु प्रसन्न जियँ जानी । बोलेउ राउ रहँसि मृदु बानी ॥
नाथ रामु करिअहिं जुबराजू । कहिअ कृपा करि करिअ समाजू ॥ १ ॥
मोहि अछत यहु होइ उछाहू । लहहिं लोग सब लोचन लाहू ॥
प्रभु प्रसाद सिवँ सबइ निबाहीं । यह लालसा एक मन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
पुनि न सोच तनु रहउ कि जाऊ । जेहिं न होइ पाछें पछिताऊ ॥
सुनि मुनि दसरथ बचन सुहाए । मंगल मोद मूल मन भाए ॥ ३ ॥
सुनु नृप जासु बिमुख पछिताहीं । जासु भजन बिनु जरनि न जाहीं ॥
भयउ तुम्हार तनय सोइ स्वामी । रामु पुनीत प्रेम अनुगामी ॥ ४ ॥

When the king was assured in his heart of the Guru being so favourably disposed in every way, he cheerfully said in gentle tones, "My lord, let Rāma be invested with regal powers; pray, command me so that necessary preparations may be set on foot. Let this happy event take place during my life-time so that all people may attain the reward of their eyesight. By the Lord's blessing Śiva has allowed everything to pass smoothly; this is the only longing that I have in my mind. Then I will not mind whether this body survives or not, so that I may not have to repent afterwards." The sage was pleased to hear these agreeable words of Daśaratha, which were the very fountain of felicity and joy. He said, "Listen, O king: aversion to Śrī Rāma makes one repent, while His adoration is the only means of soothing the agony of one's heart; nay, He follows like a shadow where there is unadulterated love; the same Lord Śrī Rāma has been born as a son to you. (1–4)

दो०—बेगि बिलंबु न करिअ नृप साजिअ सबुइ समाजु ।
सुदिन सुमंगलु तबहिं जब रामु होहिं जुबराजु ॥ ४ ॥

"O king, let there be no delay, and make every preparation quickly. That day itself is auspicious and full of blessings, when Rāma is proclaimed regent." (4)

चौ०—मुदित महीपति मंदिर आए । सेवक सचिव सुमंत्रु बोलाए ॥
कहि जय जीव सीस तिन्ह नाए । भूप सुमंगल बचन सुनाए ॥ १ ॥
जौं पाँचहि मत लागै नीका । करहु हरषि हियँ रामहि टीका ॥
मंत्री मुदित सुनत प्रिय बानी । अभिमत बिरवँ परेउ जनु पानी ॥ २ ॥
बिनती सचिव करहिं कर जोरी । जिअहु जगतपति बरिस करोरी ॥
जग मंगल भल काजु बिचारा । बेगिअ नाथ न लाइअ बारा ॥ ३ ॥
नृपहि मोदु सुनि सचिव सुभाषा । बढ़त बौंड़ जनु लही सुसाखा ॥ ४ ॥

The king returned rejoicing to his palace and summoned his servants and counsellors including Sumantra. They bowed their heads saying, "Victory to you; may you live long;" and the king placed before them the most auspicious proposal. "If this proposal finds favour with you all, instal Śrī Rāma on the throne with a cheerful heart." The counsellors were glad to hear these agreeable words, which fell like a shower on the young plant of their desire. The ministers prayed with joined palms: "May you continue to live for millions of years, O sovereign of the world. You have thought out

a good plan which is a source of happiness to the whole world; therefore, lord, make haste and lose no time." The king was pleased to hear the encouraging words of the ministers; it looked as if a growing creeper had obtained the support of a strong bough. (1—4)

दो०—कहेउ भूप मुनिराज कर जोइ जोइ आयसु होइ।
राम राज अभिषेक हित बेगि करहु सोइ सोइ॥ ५॥

Said the king, "Whatever orders the great sage Vasiṣṭha may be pleased to give in connection with Śrī Rāma's coronation should be promptly carried out." (5)

चौ०—हरषि मुनीस कहेउ मृदु बानी। आनहु सकल सुतीरथ पानी॥
औषध मूल फूल फल पाना। कहे नाम गनि मंगल नाना॥ १॥
चामर चरम बसन बहु भाँती। रोम पाट पट अगनित जाती॥
मनिगन मंगल बस्तु अनेका। जो जग जोगु भूप अभिषेका॥ २॥
बेद बिदित कहि सकल बिधाना। कहेउ रचहु पुर बिबिध बिताना॥
सफल रसाल पूगफल केरा। रोपहु बीथिन्ह पुर चहुँ फेरा॥ ३॥
रचहु मंजु मनि चौकें चारू। कहहु बनावन बेगि बजारू॥
पूजहु गनपति गुर कुलदेवा। सब बिधि करहु भूमिसुर सेवा॥ ४॥

The great sage Vasiṣṭha gladly said in soft accents, "Fetch water from all principal sacred places." And then he enumerated by name a number of auspicious objects such as herbs, roots, flowers, fruits, leaves, chowries, deer-skins, and draperies of various kinds including countless varieties of woollen and silken textiles, jewels and numerous other articles of good omen which were considered useful in this world for the coronation of a king. Detailing all the procedure laid down in the Vedas he said, "Erect canopies of all sorts in the city and transplant in the streets on all sides trees of the mango, arecanut and plantain with fruits. Paint beautiful designs on the floors filling them with costly jewels and tell the people to decorate the bazar promptly. Worship Lord Gaṇeśa and your preceptor as well as the tutelary deity and render service in every form to the Brahmans, the very gods on earth. (1—4)

दो०—ध्वज पताक तोरन कलस सजहु तुरग रथ नाग।
सिर धरि मुनिबर बचन सबु निज निज काजहिं लाग॥ ६॥

"Prepare flags and banners, festal arches and vases as well as horses, chariots and elephants." Bowing to these orders of the great sage (Vasiṣṭha) all concerned applied themselves to their own work. (6)

चौ०—जो मुनीस जेहि आयसु दीन्हा। सो तेहिं काजु प्रथम जनु कीन्हा॥
बिप्र साधु सुर पूजत राजा। करत राम हित मंगल काजा॥ १॥
सुनत राम अभिषेक सुहावा। बाज गहागह अवध बधावा॥
राम सीय तन सगुन जनाए। फरकहिं मंगल अंग सुहाए॥ २॥

पुलकि सप्रेम परसपर कहहीं । भरत आगमनु सूचक अहहीं ॥
भए बहुत दिन अति अवसेरी । सगुन प्रतीति भेंट प्रिय केरी ॥ ३ ॥
भरत सरिस प्रिय को जग माहीं । इहइ सगुन फलु दूसर नाहीं ॥
रामहि बंधु सोच दिन राती । अंडन्हि कमठ हृदउ जेहि भाँती ॥ ४ ॥

With whatever duty the great sage charged any man, the latter accomplished it so promptly as if it had been done by him beforehand. The king adored Brahmans, holy men and gods, and performed auspicious rites for the sake of Śrī Rāma's welfare. As soon as the delightful news of Śrī Rāma's installation reached the ears of the people, the whole of Ayodhyā resounded with festal music. Good omens manifested themselves in the person of Śrī Rāma and Sītā; Their graceful lucky limbs began to throb. Experiencing a thrill of joy they lovingly said to one another, "The omens prognosticate Bharata's return. Many days have passed and our heart longs to meet him. Auspicious omens assure us of our meeting with a beloved friend, and in this world there is no one so dear to us as Bharata; the good omens can thus have but one meaning." Śrī Rāma anxiously remembered His half-brother (Bharata) day and night, even as a turtle has its heart fixed on its eggs. (1—4)

दो०—एहि अवसर मंगलु परम सुनि रहँसेउ रनिवासु ।
सोभत लखि बिधु बढ़त जनु बारिधि बीचि बिलासु ॥ ७ ॥

That very time the ladies of the palace were delighted to hear this most auspicious news, even as the waves of the ocean commence their lovely sport on perceiving the waxing moon. (7)

चौ०—प्रथम जाइ जिन्ह बचन सुनाए । भूषन बसन भूरि तिन्ह पाए ॥
प्रेम पुलकि तन मन अनुरागीं । मंगल कलस सजन सब लागीं ॥ १ ॥
चौकें चारु सुमित्राँ पूरी । मनिमय बिबिध भाँति अति रूरी ॥
आनँद मगन राम महतारी । दिए दान बहु बिप्र हँकारी ॥ २ ॥
पूजीं ग्रामदेबि सुर नागा । कहेउ बहोरि देन बलिभागा ॥
जेहि बिधि होइ राम कल्यानू । देहु दया करि सो बरदानू ॥ ३ ॥
गावहिं मंगल कोकिलबयनीं । बिधुबदनीं मृगसावकनयनीं ॥ ४ ॥

Those who broke the news were richly rewarded with ornaments and costumes. With their body thrilling over with emotion and heart full of rapture all the queens started preparing festal vases. Queen Sumitrā painted with coloured meal lovely diagrams in various charming designs and filled them with jewels. Overwhelmed with delight Śrī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) summoned the Brahmans and loaded them with gifts. She worshipped village deities and other gods and Nāgas and vowing them further offerings said to them, "In your mercy grant me a boon which may ensure Śrī Rāma's welfare." Moon-faced and fawn-eyed ladies sang festal strains in a voice as sweet as the notes of a cuckoo. (1—4)

दो०—राम राज अभिषेकु सुनि हियँ हरषे नर नारि ।
लगे सुमंगल सजन सब बिधि अनुकूल बिचारि ॥ ८ ॥

Men and women rejoiced in their heart to hear of Śrī Rāma's installation on the throne; and thinking God to be favourably disposed towards them all began to make festal preparations. (8)

चौ०—तब नरनाहँ बसिष्ठु बोलाए । रामधाम सिख देन पठाए ॥
गुर आगमनु सुनत रघुनाथा । द्वार आइ पद नायउ माथा ॥ १ ॥
सादर अरघ देइ घर आने । सोरह भाँति पूजि सनमाने ॥
गहे चरन सिय सहित बहोरी । बोले रामु कमल कर जोरी ॥ २ ॥
सेवक सदन स्वामि आगमनू । मंगल मूल अमंगल दमनू ॥
तदपि उचित जनु बोलि सप्रीती । पठइअ काज नाथ असि नीती ॥ ३ ॥
प्रभुता तजि प्रभु कीन्ह सनेहू । भयउ पुनीत आजु यहु गेहू ॥
आयसु होइ सो करौं गोसाईं । सेवकु लहइ स्वामि सेवकाईं ॥ ४ ॥

The king then called Vasiṣṭha and sent him to Śrī Rāma's apartments for tendering opportune advice. The moment the Lord of Raghus, Śrī Rāma, heard of the Guru's arrival, He repaired to the door and bowed His head at his feet. Reverently offering him water to wash his hands with He ushered the sage and paid him honour by worshipping him in the sixteen prescribed modes.* Then clasping his feet with Sītā, Śrī Rāma spoke with His lotus palms joined in prayer, "A master's visit to his servant's house is the root of all blessings and a panacea for all evils; yet it would have been more fitting, my lord, for the master to have lovingly sent for the servant and charged him with a duty; for such is the right course. Since, however, my lord has laid aside his authority and showed his affection to me (by calling on me) my house has been hallowed today. I am ready to do what I am bid, holy sir; for a servant is benefited only by serving his master." (1—4)

दो०—सुनि सनेह साने बचन मुनि रघुबरहि प्रसंस ।
राम कस न तुम्ह कहहु अस हंस बंस अवतंस ॥ ९ ॥

On hearing these words, steeped in affection as they were, the sage applauded the Chief of Raghus, Śrī Rāma, and said, "It is but meet, O Rāma, that you should say so, the ornament of the solar race that you are." (9)

चौ०—बरनि राम गुन सीलु सुभाऊ । बोले प्रेम पुलकि मुनिराऊ ॥
भूप सजेउ अभिषेक समाजू । चाहत देन तुम्हहि जुबराजू ॥ १ ॥
राम करहु सब संजम आजू । जौं बिधि कुसल निबाहै काजू ॥
गुरु सिख देइ राय पहिं गयऊ । राम हृदयँ अस बिसमउ भयऊ ॥ २ ॥

---

* The sixteen modes of worship prescribed in Tantric works consist in offering the following:—(1) Āsana (seat), (2) Pādya (water for washing the feet), (3) Arghya (water for washing the hands), (4) Āchamaniya (water to drink), (5) Snāniya (water for ablution), (6) Gandha (sandal-paste), (7) Vastra (raiment), (8) Puṣpa (flowers), (9) Dhūpa (burning incense), (10) Dīpa (light), (11) Naivedya (food), (12) Āchamaniya (water for rinsing the mouth), (13) Tāmbūla (betel-leaves), (14) Dakṣiṇā (a gift in coins), (15) Pradakṣiṇā (circumambulation), and (16) Nīrājana (waving lights).

जनमे एक संग सब भाई । भोजन सयन केलि लरिकाई ॥
करनबेध उपबीत बिआहा । संग संग सब भए उछाहा ॥ ३ ॥
बिमल बंस यहु अनुचित एकू । बंधु बिहाइ बड़ेहि अभिषेकू ॥
प्रभु सप्रेम पछितानि सुहाई । हरउ भगत मन कै कुटिलाई ॥ ४ ॥

Extolling Śrī Rāma's goodness, amiability and noble disposition, the lord of sages, Vasiṣṭha, said, thrilling over with emotion, "The king has made preparations for the installation ceremony; he would invest You with regal powers. Rāma, You should observe religious austerity today so that God may bring this affair to a happy conclusion." Having admonished Him in this way the Guru returned to the king; while Śrī Rāma felt uneasy in His heart and said to Himself, "My brothers and myself were all born together and together have we dined, slept and played in our childhood; the piercing of our ear-lobes, (one of the sixteen sacraments incumbent on a Hindu), our investiture with the sacred thread, wedding and all other ceremonies have been gone through together. The only unseemly practice in this spotless line is that the eldest should be installed on the throne to the exclusion of his younger brothers." May this loving and graceful expression of regret on the part of the Lord drive away all suspicion from the mind of His devotees. (1–4)

दो०—तेहि अवसर आए लखन मगन प्रेम आनंद ।
सनमाने प्रिय बचन कहि रघुकुल कैरव चंद ॥ १० ॥

On that very occasion came Lakṣmaṇa steeped in love and rapture; Śrī Rāma, who delighted Raghu's race even as the moon delights a lily flower, greeted him with endearing words. (10)

चौ०—बाजहिं बाजने बिबिध बिधाना । पुर प्रमोदु नहिं जाइ बखाना ॥
भरत आगमनु सकल मनावहिं । आवहुँ बेगि नयन फलु पावहिं ॥ १ ॥
हाट बाट घर गलीं अथाईं । कहहिं परसपर लोग लोगाईं ॥
कालि लगन भलि केतिक बारा । पूजिहि बिधि अभिलाषु हमारा ॥ २ ॥
कनक सिंघासन सीय समेता । बैठहिं रामु होइ चित चेता ॥
सकल कहहिं कब होइहि काली । बिघन मनावहिं देव कुचाली ॥ ३ ॥
तिन्हहि सोहाइ न अवध बधावा । चोरहि चंदिनि राति न भावा ॥
सारद बोलि बिनय सुर करहीं । बारहिं बार पाय लै परहीं ॥ ४ ॥

There was a sound of music of various kinds, and the rejoicing in the city was beyond words. All prayed for Bharata's return (from his maternal uncle's) and said to one another, "Would that Bharata came with expedition and obtained the reward of his eyes." In every bazar, street, house, lane and place of resort men and women talked to one another, "When will that blessed hour start tomorrow, during which God will fulfil our desire, when with Sītā beside Him Śrī Rāma will take His seat on the throne of gold and when the object of our desire will be accomplished?" They all said, "When will the morrow come?" while the wicked gods prayed that some trouble

might brew in the meantime. The rejoicing that was going on in Ayodhyā did not please them even as a moon-lit night is not liked by a thief. Invoking Śāradā the gods supplicated her and laying hold of her feet fell at them again and again. (1—4)

दो०—बिपति हमारि बिलोकि बड़ि मातु करिअ सोइ आजु ।
रामु जाहिं बन राजु तजि होइ सकल सुरकाजु ॥ ११ ॥

"Perceiving our grave calamity, O Mother, manipulate things in such a way today that Śrī Rāma may retire into the forest, relinquishing His throne, and the object of us immortals may be wholly accomplished." (11)

चौ०—सुनि सुर बिनय ठाढ़ि पछिताती । भइउँ सरोज बिपिन हिमराती ॥
देखि देव पुनि कहहिं निहोरी । मातु तोहि नहिं थोरिउ खोरी ॥ १ ॥
बिसमय हरष रहित रघुराऊ । तुम्ह जानहु सब राम प्रभाऊ ॥
जीव करम बस सुख दुख भागी । जाइअ अवध देव हित लागी ॥ २ ॥
बार बार गहि चरन सँकोची । चली बिचारि बिबुध मति पोची ॥
ऊँच निवासु नीचि करतूती । देखि न सकहिं पराइ बिभूती ॥ ३ ॥
आगिल काजु बिचारि बहोरी । करिहहिं चाह कुसल कबि मोरी ॥
हरषि हृदयँ दसरथ पुर आई । जनु ग्रह दसा दुसह दुखदाई ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing this prayer of the divinities goddess Śāradā stood still and was grieved at the thought that she was going to play the same role with reference to the people of Ayodhyā as a wintry night does with respect to a bed of lotuses. Seeing her downcast the gods spoke again in a suppliant tone, "Mother, not the least blame will attach to you; for the Lord of Raghus is above sorrow and joy alike. You are fully acquainted with Śrī Rāma's glory. As for the people, every embodied soul is subject to pleasure and pain according to its fate. Therefore, you should go to Ayodhyā for the good of the celestials." Clasping her feet again and again they exerted great pressure on her till she yielded and set out, considering the gods as mean-minded. She said to herself, "Though their abode is on high, their doings are mean; they cannot see others' prosperity." Again, reflecting on the role she was destined to perform in the days to come, when worthy poets would seek her favour, she came with a cheerful heart to the capital of Daśaratha like the intolerably evil influence of a planet. (1—4)

दो०—नामु मंथरा मंदमति चेरी कैकइ केरि ।
अजस पेटारी ताहि करि गई गिरा मति फेरि ॥ १२ ॥

Now Kaikeyī (Bharata's mother) had a dull-witted servant-maid, Mantharā by name; having perverted her reason and making her a receptacle of ill-repute, the goddess of speech returned to her abode. (12)

चौ०—दीख मंथरा नगरु बनावा । मंजुल मंगल बाज बधावा ॥
पूछेसि लोगन्ह काह उछाहू । राम तिलकु सुनि भा उर दाहू ॥ १ ॥

करइ बिचारु कुबुद्धि कुजाती । होइ अकाजु कवनि बिधि राती ॥
देखि लागि मधु कुटिल किराती । जिमि गव तकइ लेउँ केहि भाँती ॥ २ ॥
भरत मातु पहिं गइ बिलखानी । का अनमनि हसि कह हँसि रानी ॥
ऊतरु, देइ न लेइ उसासू । नारि चरित करि ढारइ आँसू ॥ ३ ॥
हँसि कह रानि गालु बड़ तोरें । दीन्ह लखन सिख अस मन मोरें ॥
तबहुँ न बोल चेरि बड़ि पापिनि । छाड़इ स्वास कारि जनु साँपिनि ॥ ४ ॥

Mantharā saw the city decorated and festal music melodiously playing; she, therefore, asked the people, "What is all this rejoicing about?" When she heard of Srī Rāma's coming installation, she felt distressed in her heart. That evil-minded and low-born woman pondered how mischief might be created overnight, even as a wily Bhil woman who has seen a honeycomb hanging from a tree schemes how to get hold of the honey. Pulling a long face she approached Bharata's mother. "What makes you look so grave?" the queen smilingly asked. She made no answer, but only heaved a deep sigh, and adopting the ways of women shed crocodile tears. Said the queen laughing, "You are a most saucy girl; what I suspect, therefore, is that Lakṣmaṇa has taught you a lesson." Even then the most wicked servant-maid would not speak and merely hissed like a cobra. (1—4)

दो०—सभय रानि कह कहसि किन कुसल रामु महिपालु ।
लखनु भरतु रिपुदमनु सुनि भा कुबरी उर सालु ॥ १३ ॥

Apprehensive of mischief, the queen said to her, "How is it that you do not speak? I hope Rāma and his royal father, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Ripudamana (Śatrughna) are all well?" The hump-backed woman (Mantharā) was pained at heart to hear these words. (13)

चौ०—कत सिख देइ हमहि कोउ माई । गालु करब केहि कर बलु पाई ॥
रामहि छाड़ि कुसल केहि आजू । जेहि जनेसु देइ जुबराजू ॥ १ ॥
भयउ कौसिलहि बिधि अति दाहिन । देखत गरब रहत उर नाहिन ॥
देखहु कस न जाइ सब सोभा । जो अवलोकि मोर मनु छोभा ॥ २ ॥
पूतु बिदेस न सोचु तुम्हारें । जानति हहु बस नाहु हमारें ॥
नीद बहुत प्रिय सेज तुराई । लखहु न भूप कपट चतुराई ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि प्रिय बचन मलिन मनु जानी । झुकी रानि अब रहु अरगानी ॥
पुनि अस कबहुँ कहसि घरफोरी । तब धरि जीभ कढ़ावउँ तोरी ॥ ४ ॥

"Why should anyone, O mother, give me a lesson? And on whose strength shall I be cheeky? Who is happy today, except Rāma, whom the king is going to invest with regal powers? Providence has turned most favourable to Kausalyā; seeing this she cannot contain the pride of her bosom. Why not go and see for yourself all the splendour, the sight of which has agitated my mind? Your son is away; while you are complacent under the notion that your lord is under your thumb. You are excessively fond of sleeping on a cushioned bed and are unable to detect the deceitful

cunning of the king." Hearing these affectionate words, yet knowing her malicious mind, the queen angrily said, "Keep quiet now. If you ever speak thus again, expert as you are in sowing seeds of discord in a family, I will have your tongue pulled out. (1—4)

दो०—काने खोरे कूबरे कुटिल कुचाली जानि ।
तिय बिसेषि पुनि चेरि कहि भरतमातु मुसुकानि ॥ १४ ॥

"The one-eyed, the lame and the hump-backed, know these to be perverse and wicked, more so if they come of the fair sex and particularly those belonging to the menial class!" said Bharata's mother and smiled. (14)

चौ०—प्रियबादिनि सिख दीन्हिउँ तोही । सपनेहुँ तो पर कोपु न मोही ॥
सुदिनु सुमंगल दायकु सोई । तोर कहा फुर जेहि दिन होई ॥ १ ॥
जेठ स्वामि सेवक लघु भाई । यह दिनकर कुल रीति सुहाई ॥
राम तिलकु जौं साँचेहुँ काली । देउँ मागु मन भावत आली ॥ २ ॥
कौसल्या सम सब महतारी । रामहि सहज सुभायँ पिआरी ॥
मो पर करहिं सनेहु बिसेषी । मैं करि प्रीति परीछा देखी ॥ ३ ॥
जौं बिधि जनमु देइ करि छोहू । होहुँ राम सिय पूत पुतोहू ॥
प्रान तें अधिक रामु प्रिय मोरें । तिन्ह कें तिलक छोभु कस तोरें ॥ ४ ॥

"O sweet-tongued girl, I have said all this to you by way of advice; otherwise I cannot even dream of being angry with you. That day alone will be auspicious and a bestower of good fortune, when your words will come to be true. The eldest brother should be the lord and the younger ones his servants: such is the blessed custom prevailing in the solar race. If Śrī Rāma's inauguration is really taking place tomorrow, ask of me, my friend, what pleases your mind and I will grant it. By his innate disposition Rāma loves all his mothers as dearly as Kausalyā. He is particularly fond of me; I have had occasions to test his love. Should God in His mercy vouchsafe to me a human birth again, may Rāma and Sītā be my son and daughter-in-law respectively. Rāma is dearer to me than life; how is it that you have got perturbed at the news of his inauguration? (1—4)

दो०—भरत सपथ तोहि सत्य कहु परिहरि कपट दुराउ ।
हरष समय बिसमउ करसि कारन मोहि सुनाउ ॥ १५ ॥

"I adjure you in Bharata's name to tell me the truth putting away all deceit and reservation. Let me know the reason why you should grieve on an occasion of rejoicing." (15)

चौ०—एकहिं बार आस सब पूजी । अब कछु कहब जीभ करि दूजी ॥
फोरै जोगु कपारु अभागा । भलेउ कहत दुख रउरेहि लागा ॥ १ ॥
कहहिं झूठि फुरि बात बनाई । ते प्रिय तुम्हहि करुइ मैं माई ॥
हमहुँ कहबि अब ठकुरसोहाती । नाहिं त मौन रहब दिनु राती ॥ २ ॥

करि कुरूप बिधि परबस कीन्हा । बवा सो लुनिअ लहिअ जो दीन्हा ॥
कोउ नृप होउ हमहि का हानी । चेरि छाड़ि अब होब कि रानी ॥ ३ ॥
जार जोगु सुभाउ हमारा । अनभल देखि न जाइ तुम्हारा ॥
तातें कछुक बात अनुसारी । छमिअ देबि बड़ि चूक हमारी ॥ ४ ॥

"I have had all my ambitions fulfilled as a result of my speaking only once; I shall now speak again with another tongue. My wretched head surely deserves to be smashed since you get offended even at my well-meaning words. Those alone who speak unctuous words, minding not what is true and what is false, are your favourites, while I am disagreeable to you. From this day onward I too will utter only that which is palatable to my mistress, or else will keep mum all the twenty-four hours. God has given me a misshapen body and made me dependent on others; one must reap as one has sown and must get what one has given. Whoever may be the ruler, I lose nothing thereby; for shall I cease to be a servant and become a queen now? Damnable is my nature in that I cannot bear to see harm come to you. That is why I just broached the topic. But it was a great blunder on my part; therefore, pardon me, O venerable lady." (1–4)

दो०—गूढ़ कपट प्रिय बचन सुनि तीय अधरबुधि रानि ।
सुरमाया बस बैरिनिहि सुहृद जानि पतिआनि ॥ १६ ॥

Hearing these pregnant and agreeably deceitful words, the queen, who was a woman with an unstable mind and was dominated by the celestial Māya reposed her faith in an enemy mistaking her for a friend. (16)

चौ०—सादर पुनि पुनि पूँछति ओही । सबरी गान मृगी जनु मोही ॥
तसि मति फिरी अहइ जसि भावी । रहसी चेरि घात जनु फाबी ॥ १ ॥
तुम्ह पूछहु मैं कहत डेराऊँ । धरेहु मोर घरफोरी नाऊँ ॥
सजि प्रतीति बहुबिधि गढ़ि छोली । अवध साढ़साती तब बोली ॥ २ ॥
प्रिय सिय रामु कहा तुम्ह रानी । रामहि तुम्ह प्रिय सो फुरि बानी ॥
रहा प्रथम अब ते दिन बीते । समउ फिरें रिपु होहिं पिरीते ॥ ३ ॥
भानु कमल कुल पोषनिहारा । बिनु जल जारि करइ सोइ छारा ॥
जरि तुम्हारि चह सवति उखारी । रूँधहु करि उपाउ बर बारी ॥ ४ ॥

Again and again the queen politely questioned Mantharā, hyptonized as she was by the latter's guileful words like a doe fascinated by the music of a Bhil woman. Her mind was changed according to the decree of fate and the servant-maid was pleased to find her plan succeed. She replied, "While you persist in questioning me, I am afraid to open my lips, since you have given me the name of a mischief-maker." Thus working up the queen's faith and manipulating her according to her own liking in every way, Mantharā, who spelt disaster for Ayodhyā like the evil influence exerted by the planet Saturn for a period of seven and a half years (according to Indian Astrology), then spoke, "You said just now, O queen, that Sītā and Rāma were dear to you and that you

had endeared yourself to Rāma; this assertion of yours is true. This is, however, a thing of the past; those days have now gone by. When the tide turns even friends become foes. The sun fosters the family of lotuses; but in the absence of water it burns them to ashes. Your co-wife (Kausalyā) would strike at your very root; protect it by means of a good fence in the form of a remedy. (1–4)

दो०—तुम्हहि न सोचु सोहाग बल निज बस जानहु राउ ।
मन मलीन मुह मीठ नृपु राउर सरल सुभाउ ॥ १७ ॥

"You are free from anxiety on the strength of your husband's love and know him to be under your sway. The king, however, is malicious of mind, though sweet of tongue; while you possess a guileless nature. (17)

चौ०—चतुर गँभीर राम महतारी । बीचु पाइ निज बात सँवारी ॥
पठए भरतु भूप ननिअउरें । राम मातु मत जानब रउरें ॥ १ ॥
सेवहिं सकल सवति मोहि नीकें । गरबित भरत मातु बल पी कें ॥
सालु तुम्हार कौसिलहि माई । कपट चतुर नहिं होइ जनाई ॥ २ ॥
राजहि तुम्ह पर प्रेमु बिसेषी । सवति सुभाउ सकइ नहिं देखी ॥
रचि प्रपंचु भूपहि अपनाई । राम तिलक हित लगन धराई ॥ ३ ॥
यह कुल उचित राम कहुँ टीका । सबहि सोहाइ मोहि सुठि नीका ॥
आगिलि बात समुझि डरु मोही । देउ दैउ फिरि सो फलु ओही ॥ ४ ॥

"Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) is clever and deep; finding a suitable opportunity she has turned it to account. You must know it is at the suggestion of Rāma's mother that the king has sent away Bharata to his maternal grandfather's. She says to herself, "All my other co-wives serve me well, only Bharata's mother (yourself) is proud, because of her influence with her lord. It is therefore, O mother, that you rankle in Kausalyā's heart; but she is too crafty to disclose her mind. The king is particularly fond of you; but due to the jealousy to which a co-wife is naturally subject, Kausalyā cannot tolerate it. That is why by resorting to machination and winning over the king she has prevailed on him to fix a date for Rāma's installation on the throne. The inauguration of Rāma is in accord with the traditions of the family; it is liked by all and is quite to my taste. I, however, shudder to think of the consequences; may heaven so ordain that the mischief may recoil on her own head." (1–4)

दो०—रचि पचि कोटिक कुटिलपन कीन्हेसि कपट प्रबोधु ।
कहिसि कथा सत सवति कै जेहि बिधि बाढ़ बिरोधु ॥ १८ ॥

Inventing and injecting many a mischievous formula, Mantharā put the queen off the scent and told her a hundred and one stories of co-wives so as to foment her jealousy. (18)

चौ०—भावी बस प्रतीति उर आई । पूँछ रानि पुनि सपथ देवाई ॥
का पूँछहु तुम्ह अबहुँ न जाना । निज हित अनहित पसु पहिचाना ॥ १ ॥

भयउ पाखु दिन सजत समाजू । तुम्ह पाई सुधि मोहि सन आजू ॥
खाइअ पहिरिअ राज तुम्हारें । सत्य कहें नहिं दोषु हमारें ॥ २ ॥
जौं असत्य कछु कहब बनाई । तौ बिधि देइहि हमहि सजाई ॥
रामहि तिलक कालि जौं भयऊ । तुम्ह कहुँ बिपति बीजु बिधि बयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
रेख खँचाइ कहउँ बलु भाषी । भामिनि भइहु दूध कइ माखी ॥
जौं सुत सहित करहु सेवकाई । तौ घर रहहु न आन उपाई ॥ ४ ॥

As fate would have it, the queen felt assured in her heart of Mantharā's fidelity; adjuring her by her own life she questioned Mantharā once more. "What is it that you inquire about? It is strange that you should not understand things even now! Even a quadruped knows what is good or bad for it. Preparations have been going on for the last fortnight; while you have got the news from me today. I get food and clothing under your tutelage; hence I cannot be blamed for speaking the truth. If I tell a lie giving it the colour of truth, God will punish me for the same. Should Rāma's inauguration take place tomorrow, God will have sown the seed of adversity for you. I swear and tell you most emphatically, O lady, that you have been discarded now as a fly from a cup of milk. If you and your son accept the role of servants, then alone you will be allowed to stay in the house; and in no other circumstance. (1–4)

दो०—कद्रूँ बिनतहि दीन्ह दुखु तुम्हहि कौसिलाँ देब ।
भरतु बंदिगृह सेइहहिं लखनु राम के नेब ॥ १९ ॥

"Kadrū (the progenitress of the serpent race) persecuted her co-wife Vinatā* (mother of the whole feathered kingdom); so will Kausalyā tyrannize over you. Bharata will rot in prison, while Lakṣmaṇa will be Rāma's lieutenant. (19)

चौ०—कैकयसुता सुनत कटु बानी । कहि न सकइ कछु सहमि सुखानी ॥
तन पसेउ कदली जिमि काँपी । कुबरीं दसन जीभ तब चाँपी ॥ १ ॥

* The names Kadrū and Vinatā take us back to the beginning of creation. The Purāṇas (a class of sacred literature dealing with the history of the entire cosmos and wrongly supposed by modern critics both in India and abroad to be works on mythology) declare that the different species of living beings from celestials down to the tiniest insect took their common descent from the sage Kaśyapa through different mothers. Of them Kadrū gave birth to the race of serpents, while Vinatā brought forth the winged creation. Once there was a controversy between the two ladies about the colour of the tail of the celestial horse Uchchaiḥśravā. Vinatā insisted that the horse was white in colour while Kadrū maintained that it was dark. It was mutually agreed that the lady whose version proved untrue should serve the other as a handmaid for the rest of her life. When Kadrū came to know that the horses were really white in colour, she managed to hoodwink the guileless Vinatā by asking her sons (the cobra race) to cover the tail of Uchchaiḥśravā by their own dark forms and thus lending it a dark hue. Vinatā was thus made to serve her co-wife for a number of years and suffered great persecution at her hands, till she was liberated by Garuḍa (Vinatā's powerful son and the celebrated vehicle of Bhagavān Viṣṇu). The story is told at length in the *Ādiparva* of the *Mahābhārata*.

कहि कहि कोटिक कपट कहानी । धीरजु धरहु प्रबोधिसि रानी ॥
फिरा करमु प्रिय लागि कुचाली । बकिहि सराहइ मानि मराली ॥ २ ॥
सुनु मंथरा बात फुरि तोरी । दहिनि आँखि नित फरकइ मोरी ॥
दिन प्रति देखउँ राति कुसपने । कहउँ न तोहि मोह बस अपने ॥ ३ ॥
काह करौं सखि सूध सुभाऊ । दाहिन बाम न जानउँ काऊ ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing these unpleasant remarks, Kekaya's daughter (Kaikeyī) shrivelled with fear and could not utter a word. Her body was wet with perspiration and shook like a plantain stalk. The humpback then bit her tongue (for fear lest the gloomy picture drawn by her might break Kaikeyī's heart). Telling her one after another many a story of wiles Mantharā comforted the queen and asked her to be of good cheer. At last the tide turned and Kaikeyī conceived a fondness for mischief: she applauded a heron mistaking it for a swan. "Listen, O Mantharā; what you say is quite true. My right eye ever throbs and I have an evil dream every night; but in my folly I did not tell you. I cannot help it, my friend; I am so guileless by nature. I cannot distinguish a friend from a foe. (1–4)

दो०—अपनें चलत न आजु लगि अनभल काहुक कीन्ह ।
केहिं अघ एकहि बार मोहि दैअँ दुसह दुखु दीन्ह ॥ २० ॥

"Never to this day have I done an evil turn to anybody during my ascendancy. I wonder for what offence has Providence subjected me to such terrible suffering all at once. (20)

चौ०—नैहर जनमु भरब बरु जाई । जिअत न करबि सवति सेवकाई ॥
अरि बस दैउ जिआवत जाही । मरनु नीक तेहि जीवन चाही ॥ १ ॥
दीन बचन कह बहुबिधि रानी । सुनि कुबरीं तियमाया ठानी ॥
अस कस कहहु मानि मन ऊना । सुखु सोहागु तुम्ह कहुँ दिन दूना ॥ २ ॥
जेहिं राउर अति अनभल ताका । सोइ पाइहि यहु फलु परिपाका ॥
जब तें कुमत सुना मैं स्वामिनि । भूख न बासर नीद न जामिनि ॥ ३ ॥
पूँछेउँ गुनिन्ह रेख तिन्ह खाँची । भरत भुआल होहिं यह साँची ॥
भामिनि करहु त कहौं उपाऊ । है तुम्हरीं सेवा बस राऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"I would fain go and spend the rest of my life at my father's but would on no account serve a co-wife so long as there is life in me. For him whom heaven allows to survive as a dependant of an enemy, death is preferable to life." The queen uttered many such words of despondency; at this the humpback resorted to the wily ways of a woman. "Why should you speak in this strain, indulging in self-deprecia-tion? Your happiness and good-luck will be ever on the increase. Whoever has contemplated such gross mischief to you shall eventually reap its fruit. Ever since I heard of this plot, my lady, I have felt no appetite during the day and have had no wink of sleep at night. I consulted the astrologers and they declared in positive terms: 'Bharata shall be the king: this much is certain.' If you act up to it, O good lady, I will offer a suggestion to you; the king is under an obligation to you." (1–4)

दो०—परउँ कूप तुअ बचन पर सकउँ पूत पति त्यागि ।
कहसि मोर दुखु देखि बड़ कस न करब हित लागि ॥ २१ ॥

"At your suggestion I would throw myself down a well and can even forsake my son and husband. When you tell me to do something in view of my dire distress, why should I not comply with it in my own interest?" (21)

चौ०—कुबरीं करि कबुली कैकेई । कपट छुरी उर पाहन टेई ॥
लखइ न रानि निकट दुखु कैसें । चरइ हरित तिन बलिपसु जैसें ॥ १ ॥
सुनत बात मृदु अंत कठोरी । देति मनहुँ मधु माहुर घोरी ॥
कहइ चेरि सुधि अहइ कि नाहीं । स्वामिनि कहिहु कथा मोहि पाहीं ॥ २ ॥
दुइ बरदान भूप सन थाती । मागहु आजु जुड़ावहु छाती ॥
सुतहि राजु रामहि बनबासू । देहु लेहु सब सवति हुलासू ॥ ३ ॥
भूपति राम सपथ जब करई । तब मागेहु जेहिं बचनु न टरई ॥
होइ अकाजु आजु निसि बीतें । बचनु मोर प्रिय मानेहु जी तें ॥ ४ ॥

Winning over Kaikeyī and treating her as an offering accepted for sacrifice the humpback whetted the knife of trickery on the stone of her heart. The queen, however, like a sacrificial beast who nibbled the green turf, did not foresee the impending calamity. Agreeable to hear, yet painful in consequence, were the words she spoke; it seemed as if she was administering honey mixed with poison. Said the maid-servant, "Do you, or do you not, remember the incident you once told me, my lady? You have in reserve with the king a couple of boons that he once promised you.* Ask for them today and soothe your heart. Bestow sovereignty on your son and an abode in the forest on Rāma and rob your co-wives of all their joy. When the king swears by Rāma, ask the boons only then, so that the former may not go back upon his word. The scheme will fail if this night is allowed to pass; cherish my words as dearer than life." (1—4)

* It is stated in Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa* that King Daśaratha was once engaged in a combat with the demon king Śambara on behalf of the gods. The king was mortally wounded and fell unconscious in his chariot, while his charioteer also fell. The valiant Queen Kaikeyī, who had accompanied her royal husband to the field of battle, assumed the role of a charioteer and removed the king to a safe retreat. When the king regained his consciousness and came to know of the timely help rendered by the queen he was immensely pleased and offered her a couple of boons. The queen, however, kept them in reserve and did not ask for anything on that occasion.

The *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa* (forming part of the *Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa*), however, tells a different story. There we are told that while King Daśaratha was once fighting with the demons on behalf of the gods the axle of the wheels of his chariot got loosened and was about to fall when Queen Kaikeyī, who had accompanied the king to the battle-field, perceived it and inserting her own arm in place of the axle prevented the chariot from toppling down and held her arm in that position till her husband was able to vanquish his foe. The king was filled with admiration and gratitude when he marked this heroic feat of his queen and offered her two boons, which the queen prudently reserved for a future occasion.

दो०—बड़ कुघातु करि पातकिनि कहेसि कोपगृहँ जाहु ।
काजु सँवारेहु सजग सबु सहसा जनि पतिआहु ॥ २२ ॥

Having thus hatched her very cruel design against the queen the wretch said, "Betake yourself to the sulking-room. Manage the whole affair discreetly and be not too ready to believe." (22)

चौ०—कुबरिहि रानि प्रानप्रिय जानी । बार बार बड़ि बुद्धि बखानी ॥
तोहि सम हित न मोर संसारा । बहे जात कइ भइसि अधारा ॥ १ ॥
जौं बिधि पुरब मनोरथु काली । करौं तोहि चख पूतरि आली ॥
बहुबिधि चेरिहि आदरु देई । कोपभवन गवनी कैकेई ॥ २ ॥
बिपति बीजु बरषा रितु चेरी । भुइँ भइ कुमति कैकई केरी ॥
पाइ कपट जलु अंकुर जामा । बर दोउ दल दुख फल परिनामा ॥ ३ ॥
कोप समाजु साजि सबु सोई । राजु करत निज कुमति बिगोई ॥
राउर नगर कोलाहलु होई । यह कुचालि कछु जान न कोई ॥ ४ ॥

Holding the humpback dear as life the queen applauded her uncommon shrewdness again and again. "I have no such friend as you in the whole world," she said. "You have served as a prop to one who was drifting along a stream. If God fulfils my heart's desire tomorrow, I will cherish you, my dear, as the apple of my eye." Thus lavishing every term of endearment on her maid-servant, Kaikeyī retired to the sulking-room. Discord was the seed and the servant-girl (Mantharā) the rainy season; while the evil mind of Kaikeyī served as the soil. Fed by the water of wiliness the seed took root and sprouted with the two boons as its leaves and will eventually bear the fruit of adversity. Gathering about her every token of resentment, Kaikeyī lay down on the floor in the sulking-room; while enjoying sovereignty, she was betrayed by her wicked mind. There was a great flutter in the gynaeceum as well as in the city; nobody had any inkling of this evil design. (1—4)

दो०—प्रमुदित पुर नर नारि सब सजहिं सुमंगलचार ।
एक प्रबिसहिं एक निर्गमहिं भीर भूप दरबार ॥ २३ ॥

In their ecstasy of joy all the citizens, both men and women, busied themselves with festive preparations and the entrance to the royal palace was flooded with a continuous stream of people going in and coming out. (23)

चौ०—बाल सखा सुनि हियँ हरषाहीं । मिलि दस पाँच राम पहिं जाहीं ॥
प्रभु आदरहिं प्रेमु पहिचानी । पूँछहिं कुसल खेम मृदु बानी ॥ १ ॥
फिरहिं भवन प्रिय आयसु पाई । करत परसपर राम बड़ाई ॥
को रघुबीर सरिस संसारा । सीलु सनेहु निबाहनिहारा ॥ २ ॥
जेहिं जेहिं जोनि करम बस भ्रमहीं । तहँ तहँ ईसु देउ यह हमहीं ॥
सेवक हम स्वामी सियनाहू । होउ नात यह ओर निबाहू ॥ ३ ॥

अस अभिलाषु नगर सब काहू । कैकयसुता हृदयँ अति दाहू ॥
को न कुसंगति पाइ नसाई । रहइ न नीच मतें चतुराई ॥ ४ ॥

Delighted at the news a few of Śrī Rāma's boy-companions called on Him in a body; and sensible of their affection the Lord received them kindly, and politely enquired after their health and welfare. After receiving the permission of their beloved friend they returned home speaking highly of Him to one another. "Is there anyone in this world so amiable and constant in his affection as Rāma ? In whichever species we may be born from time to time as a result of our actions, may God grant us that Sītā's spouse may be our lord and we his servants, and that this relation between us may continue till the end." Everyone in the city cherished the same desire; but there was intense agony in Kaikeyī's heart. Who is not ruined by evil company ? Man loses his wit by following the counsel of vile men. (1—4)

दो०—साँझ समय सानंद नृपु गयउ कैकई गेहँ ।
गवनु निठुरता निकट किय जनु धरि देह सनेहँ ॥ २४ ॥

At eventide the king joyously visited Kaikeyī's palace; it looked as if love incarnate had called on harshness personified. (24)

चौ०—कोपभवन सुनि सकुचेउ राऊ । भय बस अगहुड़ परइ न पाऊ ॥
सुरपति बसइ बाहँबल जाकें । नरपति सकल रहहिं रुख ताकें ॥ १ ॥
सो सुनि तिय रिस गयउ सुखाई । देखहु काम प्रताप बड़ाई ॥
सूल कुलिस असि अँगवनिहारे । ते रतिनाथ सुमन सर मारे ॥ २ ॥
सभय नरेसु प्रिया पहिं गयऊ । देखि दसा दुखु दारुन भयऊ ॥
भूमि सयन पटु मोट पुराना । दिए डारि तन भूषन नाना ॥ ३ ॥
कुमतिहि कसि कुबेषता फाबी । अनअहिवातु सूच जनु भावी ॥
जाइ निकट नृपु कह मृदु बानी । प्रानप्रिया केहि हेतु रिसानी ॥ ४ ॥

The king was taken aback when he heard of the sulking-room. His feet refused to advance on account of fear. He under whose powerful arm the lord of celestials dwelt secure and whose goodwill was ever sought by all rulers of men was stunned at the news of his wife's anger: look at the mighty power of sexual love ! Even those who have endured the blows of a spear thunderbolt or sword have been over come with the flowery shafts of Rati's lord (the god of Love). The king timidly approached his beloved queen and was terribly distressed to perceive her condition. She was lying on the floor in old and coarse attire having cast away all the ornaments of her person. Her wretched garb so eminently befitted her, prognosticating as it were her impending widowhood. Drawing close to her the king asked in soft accents, "Why are you angry, my soul's delight ?" (1—4)

छं०—केहि हेतु रानि रिसानि परसत पानि पतिहि नेवारई ।
मानहुँ सरोष भुअंग भामिनि बिषम भाँति निहारई ॥

दोउ बासना रसना दसन बर मरम ठाहरु देखई ।
तुलसी नृपति भवतब्यता बस काम कौतुक लेखई ॥

As the king touched her with his hand saying "Why are you angry, my queen?", Kaikeyī threw it aside and flashed upon him a furious glance like an enraged serpent with the two (above-mentioned) cravings of her heart for its bifurcated tongue and the boons (that had been promised to her by the king) for its fangs, spying out a vital part. As fate would have it, says Tulasī, the king took it all as an amorous sport.

सो०—बार बार कह राउ सुमुखि सुलोचनि पिकबचनि ।
कारन मोहि सुनाउ गजगामिनि निज कोप कर ॥ २५ ॥

Said the king again and again, "Tell me the cause of your anger, O fair-faced, bright-eyed dame with a voice melodious as the notes of a cuckoo and a gait resembling that of an elephant. (25)

चौ०—अनहित तोर प्रिया केइँ कीन्हा । केहि दुइ सिर केहि जमु चह लीन्हा ॥
कहु केहि रंकहि करौं नरेसू । कहु केहि नृपहि निकासौं देसू ॥ १ ॥
सकउँ तोर अरि अमरउ मारी । काह कीट बपुरे नर नारी ॥
जानसि मोर सुभाउ बरोरू । मनु तव आनन चंद चकोरू ॥ २ ॥
प्रिया प्रान सुत सरबसु मोरें । परिजन प्रजा सकल बस तोरें ॥
जौं कछु कहौं कपटु करि तोही । भामिनि राम सपथ सत मोही ॥ ३ ॥
बिहसि मागु मनभावति बाता । भूषन सजहि मनोहर गाता ॥
घरी कुघरी समुझि जियँ देखू । बेगि प्रिया परिहरहि कुबेषू ॥ ४ ॥

"Who is it, my dear, that has harmed you? Who is there with a head to spare and who is it that is courted by death? Tell me what pauper I should exalt to the position of a king and what monarch I should banish from his kingdom? I could slay even an immortal, were he your enemy; of what account, then, are men and women, who are mere worms as it were? You know my disposition, O beautiful lady; my mind is enamoured of your face as the Chakora bird is of the moon. O my beloved, my people and my family and all that I possess, my sons, nay, my life itself are all at your disposal. If I tell you anything insincerely, O good lady, I should be guilty of falsely swearing by Rāma a hundred times. Ask with a cheerful countenance whatever pleases your mind and adorn your charming limbs with jewels. Distinguish within yourself between an opportune and inopportune hour and give up, my darling, this unbecoming attire at once". (1—4)

दो०—यह सुनि मन गुनि सपथ बड़ि बिहसि उठी मतिमंद ।
भूषन सजति बिलोकि मृगु मनहुँ किरातिनि फंद ॥ २६ ॥

On hearing this and considering the great oath the dull-witted Kaikeyī smilingly arose and began to put on her ornaments; it seemed as if a huntress was laying the trap at the sight of a deer. (26)

चौ०—पुनि कह राउ सुहृद जियँ जानी । प्रेम पुलकि मृदु मंजुल बानी ॥
भामिनि भयउ तोर मनभावा । घर घर नगर अनंद बधावा ॥ १ ॥
रामहि देउँ कालि जुबराजू । सजहि सुलोचनि मंगल साजू ॥
दलकि उठेउ सुनि हृदउ कठोरू । जनु छुइ गयउ पाक बरतोरू ॥ २ ॥
ऐसिउ पीर बिहसि तेहिं गोई । चोर नारि जिमि प्रगटि न रोई ॥
लखहिं न भूप कपट चतुराई । कोटि कुटिल मनि गुरू पढ़ाई ॥ ३ ॥
जद्यपि नीति निपुन नरनाहू । नारिचरित जलनिधि अवगाहू ॥
कपट सनेहु बढ़ाइ बहोरी । बोली बिहसि नयन मुहु मोरी ॥ ४ ॥

Thinking her reconciled, the king spoke again in soft and winning accents, his whole frame thrilling over with emotion, "Your heart's desire, O good lady, is accomplished; every house in the city is a picture of joy and felicity Tomorrow, I am installing Rāma as the prince-regent; therefore, O bright-eyed dame, put on a festive garb." The queen's heart, hard though it was, cracked at these words; it seemed as if a festering sore had been unwarily touched. Even such (heart-rending) agony was disguised by her under the cloak of a smile, just as a thief's wife does not openly weep (on seeing her husband suffer punishment lest she should be made to share his lot). The king was unable to detect her wily designs, tutored as she was by a teacher (Mantharā) who ranked foremost among millions of villains. Although the king was skilled in statesmanship, the ways of a woman are like an unfathomable ocean. Again, with a greater show of false affection she smilingly said with a graceful movement of her face and eyes: (1—4)

दो०—मागु मागु पै कहहु पिय कबहुँ न देहु न लेहु ।
देन कहेहु बरदान दुइ तेउ पावत संदेहु ॥ २७ ॥

"You do repeat the word 'Ask, ask', but never actually give anything. You promised me a couple of boons; but I am yet doubtful about my getting them." (27)

चौ०—जानेउँ मरमु राउ हँसि कहई । तुम्हहि कोहाब परम प्रिय अहई ॥
थाती राखि न मागिहु काऊ । बिसरि गयउ मोहि भोर सुभाऊ ॥ १ ॥
झूठेहुँ हमहि दोषु जनि देहू । दुइ कै चारि मागि मकु लेहू ॥
रघुकुल रीति सदा चलि आई । प्रान जाहुँ बरु बचनु न जाई ॥ २ ॥
नहिं असत्य सम पातक पुंजा । गिरि सम होहिं कि कोटिक गुंजा ॥
सत्यमूल सब सुकृत सुहाए । बेद पुरान बिदित मनु गाए ॥ ३ ॥
तेहि पर राम सपथ करि आई । सुकृत सनेह अवधि रघुराई ॥
बात दृढ़ाइ कुमति हँसि बोली । कुमत कुबिहग कुलह जनु खोली ॥ ४ ॥

"I have now understood the whole mystery," said the king with a smile; "you are extremely fond of being angry. You kept the boons in reserve and never asked for them; as for myself, I forgot all about them, being oblivious by nature. Pray do not level a false charge against me; you might as well ask four boons instead of two. It has always been the rule with the race of Raghu that

one's plighted word must be redeemed even at the cost of one's life. Even a multitude of sins cannot be matched with a lie. Can millions of tiny Guñjā seeds ever stand comparison with a mountain? Veracity is the root of all noble virtues, as is well-known in the Vedas and Purāṇas and has been declared by Manu (the first law-giver of the world, the author of *Manusmṛti*). Over and above this I have unwittingly sworn by Rāma, the Lord of Raghus, who is the very perfection of virtue and the highest embodiment of affection." Having thus bound him to his word the evil-minded queen smilingly said, removing as it were the cap from the eyes of her hawk-like plot.* (1—4)

दो०—भूप मनोरथ सुभग बनु सुख सुबिहंग समाजु ।
भिल्लिनि जिमि छाड़न चहति बचनु भयंकरु बाजु ॥ २८ ॥

The king's desire (to see Rāma installed as the prince-regent of Ayodhyā) represented a lovely grove and the joy (that prevailed everywhere) stood for a host of charming birds. Queen Kaikeyī, who resembled a Bhil woman, sought to release a fierce falcon in the form of her piercing words. (28)

[PAUSE 13 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—सुनहु प्रानप्रिय भावत जी का । देहु एक बर भरतहि टीका ॥
मागउँ दूसर बर कर जोरी । पुरवहु नाथ मनोरथ मोरी ॥ १ ॥
तापस बेष बिसेषि उदासी । चौदह बरिस रामु बनबासी ॥
सुनि मृदु बचन भूप हियँ सोकू । ससि कर छुअत बिकल जिमि कोकू ॥ २ ॥
गयउ सहमि नहिं कछु कहि आवा । जनु सचान बन झपटेउ लावा ॥
बिबरन भयउ निपट नरपालू । दामिनि हनेउ मनहुँ तरु तालू ॥ ३ ॥
माथें हाथ मूदि दोउ लोचन । तनु धरि सोचु लाग जनु सोचन ॥
मोर मनोरथु सुरतरु फूला । फरत करिनि जिमि हतेउ समूला ॥ ४ ॥
अवध उजारि कीन्हि कैकेईं । दीन्हिसि अचल बिपति कै नेईं ॥ ५ ॥

"Hear, my beloved lord, that which pleases my heart; vouchsafe to me for one boon the installation of Bharata (as the prince-regent of Ayodhyā). And for the second boon I ask with joined palms—pray accomplish my desire, my lord: let Rāma dwell in the woods for fourteen years in the garb of a hermit and wholly detached from the world." The king was grieved at heart to hear these gentle words even as a Chakravāka bird is filled with agony at the mere touch of a moonbeam. He felt dismayed and could not utter a word, like a partridge in the woods at the swoop of a falcon. The king turned altogether pale as a palm tree struck by lightning; with his hands to his forehead and closing both his eyes he began to mourn like Grief personified. "The celestial tree of my desire, that had already blossomed, has been torn up with its roots by the elephant-like Kaikeyī just when it was about to bear fruit. She has desolated Ayodhyā and laid the foundation of everlasting misfortune. (1—5)

* Fowlers who maintain a hawk with them generally keep its eyes covered by a leather cap so that it may not attack any and every bird it sees indiscriminately, and uncover its eyes only when they intend it to attack its prey.

दो०—कवनें अवसर का भयउ गयउँ नारि बिस्वास ।
जोग सिद्धि फल समय जिमि जतिहि अबिद्या नास ॥ २९ ॥

"An inauspicious thing has happened at an auspicious moment; and I am doomed by putting trust in a woman like a striving Yogī who has been undone by nescience at a time when his practice of Yoga was just going to bear fruit in the form of Realization." (29)

चौ०—एहि बिधि राउ मनहिं मन झाँखा । देखि कुभाँति कुमति मन माखा ॥
भरतु कि राउर पूत न होंही । आनेहु मोल बेसाहि कि मोही ॥ १ ॥
जो सुनि सरु अस लाग तुम्हारें । काहे न बोलहु बचनु सँभारें ॥
देहु उतरु अनु करहु कि नाहीं । सत्यसंध तुम्ह रघुकुल माहीं ॥ २ ॥
देन कहेहु अब जनि बरु देहू । तजहु सत्य जग अपजसु लेहू ॥
सत्य सराहि कहेहु बरु देना । जानेहु लेइहि मागि चबेना ॥ ३ ॥
सिबि दधीचि बलि जो कछु भाषा । तनु धनु तजेउ बचन पनु राखा ॥
अति कटु बचन कहति कैकेई । मानहुँ लोन जरे पर देई ॥ ४ ॥

In this way the king moaned within himself. Seeing his bad plight the wicked queen sulked within her heart and said, "Is Bharata not your son? And have you bought me in consideration of money? If my words pierced you like arrows the moment they entered your ears, why should you not make promises after careful thought? Either say yes to my proposal or decline. You are true to your promise (more than anyone else) in the race of Raghu. Refuse the boons you promised me; abandon truth and court infamy in the world. Loud in your praise of truth you promised me a couple of boons, imagining of course that I would ask for a handful of parched grain. Śibi[1], Dadhīchi and

1. King Śibi was noted for his piety and large-heartedness. Once upon a time the gods deputed Indra and Agni (the god of fire) to put his generosity to the test. Agni took the form of a pigeon and Indra appeared as a hawk. While the king was sitting in his court the pigeon flew into the hall and hid in his lap. The hawk too followed him; and while the pigeon sought his protection against the hawk, the latter insisted that the pigeon was its lawful spoil and should be made over to it. The king, who knew his duty, resolved to save the pigeon's life at all costs; for as a true Kṣatriya he could not betray one who had sought shelter with him. At the same time he recognized the validity of the hawk's claim and did not want to rob it of food which it had fairly won and without which it would die of starvation. The king offered the hawk anything else that it chose to name; but the hawk would be satisfied with nothing short of an equal weight of the king's own flesh. Scales were accordingly brought; and while the pigeon was put in one balance the king chopped his flesh with his own hands and put it in the other. But even though the monarch hacked and hewed large pieces of flesh from his muscular body, the pigeon outweighed them all. The king at last bodily mounted the balance and was just going to sever his head when Indra and Agni appeared in their own celestial forms, and interposed. They blessed the king and made him whole again.

2. When Indra and the other gods were hard pressed by the demon Vṛtra, they approached Bhagavān Viṣṇu and sought His protection. God Viṣṇu told them that there was a great saint named Dadhīchi practising penance in the Naimiṣa forest, and that if he would let them have his bones

Bali* redeemed their plighted word maintaining whatever they said even at the cost of their life and possessions." In this way Kaikeyī uttered most pungent words as though applying salt to a burn. (1—4)

दो०—धरम धुरंधर धीर धरि नयन उघारे रायँ ।
सिरु धुनि लीन्हि उसास असि मारेसि मोहि कुठायँ ॥ ३० ॥

A champion of righteousness, the king took courage and opened his eyes, and beating his head sighed out, "She has smitten me in the most vital part." (30)

चौ०—आगें दीखि जरत रिस भारी । मनहुँ रोष तरवारि उघारी ॥
मूठि कुबुद्धि धार निठुराई । धरी कूबरीं सान बनाई ॥ १ ॥
लखी महीप कराल कठोरा । सत्य कि जीवनु लेइहि मोरा ॥
बोले राउ कठिन करि छाती । बानी सबिनय तासु सोहाती ॥ २ ॥
प्रिया बचन कस कहसि कुभाँती । भीर प्रतीति प्रीति करि हाँती ॥
मोरें भरतु रामु दुइ आँखी । सत्य कहउँ करि संकरु साखी ॥ ३ ॥
अवसि दूतु मैं पठइब प्राता । ऐहहिं बेगि सुनत दोउ भ्राता ॥
सुदिन सोधि सबु साजु सजाई । देउँ भरत कहुँ राजु बजाई ॥ ४ ॥

He saw her standing before him burning with rage, as if it were Fury's own sword drawn from the sheath, with a malicious mind for its hilt and remorselessness for its edge, whetted on the grindstone in the shape of the humpback (Mantharā). The king saw that the sword was dreadful and inflexible and said to himself, "Is it really going to take my life?" Then, steeling his heart, he politely spoke to her in endearing terms, "My darling, why should you utter such unbecoming words, casting all confidence and affection to the winds, O timid lady? Bharata and Rāma are my two eyes; I vouch for it calling Śankara as my witness. I will positively despatch a messenger at daybreak, and the two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) will speedily come on hearing the message. Then, after fixing an auspicious date and making all preparations I will solemnly bestow the kingdom on Bharata. (1—4)

---

they could be made into weapons, before which no enemy could stand. Dadhīchi, as soon as he heard what they wanted, gave up his ghost and out of his bones Viśwakarmā, the artisan of the gods, made a thunderbolt with which Indra easily dispatched Vṛtra.

* The demon-king Bali was so powerful that he acquired dominion over all the three worlds and ousted the gods from heaven. The mother of the gods, Aditi, prayed to Lord Viṣṇu for relief and the latter was born as a son to Aditi in the form of a dwarf (Vāmana). The dwarf appeared before Bali and as a Brahman boy asked for alms. The demon-king promised to give him whatever He asked. Bhagavān Vāmana said He wanted only as much land as could be measured in three strides. King Bali, who was noted for his generosity, granted the Brahman's request at once. The divine Dwarf now assumed colossal dimensions; in one stride He measured the whole earth and covered heaven with another. For the third step Lord Vāmana planted His foot on the blessed demon and sent him down to the subterranean region known by the name of Sutala, of which he became the sovereign. Won by his unique self-sacrifice and adherence to truth Bhagavān Vāmana ever waits as a porter at his door. King Bali will be installed as Indra in the next Manvantara.

दो॰—लोभु न रामहि राजु कर बहुत भरत पर प्रीति ।
मैं बड़ छोट बिचारि जियँ करत रहेउँ नृपनीति ॥ ३१ ॥

"Rāma has no greed of sovereignty and is deeply attached to Bharata. I was only going to follow the usage obtaining among the princes, considering the seniority and juniority of the two princes. (31)

चौ॰—राम सपथ सत कहउँ सुभाऊ । राममातु कछु कहेउ न काऊ ॥
मैं सबु कीन्ह तोहि बिनु पूँछें । तेहि तें परेउ मनोरथु छूछें ॥ १ ॥
रिस परिहरु अब मंगल साजू । कछु दिन गएँ भरत जुबराजू ॥
एकहि बात मोहि दुखु लागा । बर दूसर असमंजस मागा ॥ २ ॥
अजहूँ हृदउ जरत तेहि आँचा । रिस परिहास कि साँचेहुँ साँचा ॥
कहु तजि रोषु राम अपराधू । सबु कोउ कहइ रामु सुठि साधू ॥ ३ ॥
तुहूँ सराहसि करसि सनेहू । अब सुनि मोहि भयउ संदेहू ॥
जासु सुभाउ अरिहि अनुकूला । सो किमि करिहि मातु प्रतिकूला ॥ ४ ॥

"I sincerely tell you, swearing by Rāma a hundred times, that his mother (Kausalyā) never said a word to me in this connection. No doubt I arranged everything without consulting you and that is why my cherished desire has not been realized. Now give up your anger and put on a festal garb; a few days hence Bharata will be the prince-regent. Only one thing has caused me pain; the second boon that you have asked for is something incongruous. My heart is still burning with the agony caused by it. Is it anger or jest, or is it all really true? Tell me with a cool mind Śrī Rāma's guilt; everybody says Rāma is extremely well-behaved. You too spoke well of him and loved him. Hearing now what you have asked, I have begun to suspect (whether your profession of love was genuine). How could he whose temperament was congenial even to an enemy act contrary to the will of his own mother? (1—4)

दो॰—प्रिया हास रिस परिहरहि मागु बिचारि बिबेकु ।
जेहिं देखौं अब नयन भरि भरत राज अभिषेकु ॥ ३२ ॥

"No more of jesting or anger, my darling; make a reasonable and thoughtful request, so that I may now regale my eyes on the sight of Bharata's installation on the throne. (32)

चौ॰—जिऐ मीन बरु बारि बिहीना । मनि बिनु फनिकु जिऐ दुख दीना ॥
कहउँ सुभाउ न छलु मन माहीं । जीवनु मोर राम बिनु नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
समुझि देखु जियँ प्रिया प्रबीना । जीवनु राम दरस आधीना ॥
सुनि मृदु बचन कुमति अति जरई । मनहुँ अनल आहुति घृत परई ॥ २ ॥
कहइ करहु किन कोटि उपाया । इहाँ न लागिहि राउरि माया ॥
देहु कि लेहु अजसु करि नाहीं । मोहि न बहुत प्रपंच सोहाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
रामु साधु तुम्ह साधु सयाने । राममातु भलि सब पहिचाने ॥
जस कौसिलाँ मोर भल ताका । तस फलु उन्हहि देउँ करि साका ॥ ४ ॥

"A fish may rather survive even without water and a serpent may drag on a miserable and wretched existence without the gem in its head. But I tell you sincerely with a guileless heart that I cannot live without Rāma. Be assured in your mind, my wise darling, that my very existence depends on the sight of Śrī Rāma." Hearing these soft words the evil-minded queen blazed up like the fire on which has fallen an oblation of clarified butter. She said, "You might as well try millions of devices; but your stratagem shall not avail with me. Either grant my request or earn a bad reputation by refusing it; I am not fond of much wiles. Rāma is virtuous, you too are virtuous and wise and no less virtuous is Rāma's mother (Kausalyā); I have known all of you. I will repay with a vengeance the benefit she has sought to confer upon me. (1—4)

दो०—होत प्रातु मुनिबेष धरि जौं न रामु बन जाहिं।
मोर मरनु राउर अजस नृप समुझिअ मन माहिं ॥ ३३ ॥

"If Rāma does not retire to the woods assuming the garb of a hermit as soon as the day breaks, death for me and ill-repute for you will be the result; bear this in mind, O king." (33)

चौ०—अस कहि कुटिल भई उठि ठाढ़ी। मानहुँ रोष तरंगिनि बाढ़ी॥
पाप पहार प्रगट भइ सोई। भरी क्रोध जल जाइ न जोई॥ १ ॥
दोउ बर कूल कठिन हठ धारा। भवँर कूबरी बचन प्रचारा॥
ढाहत भूपरूप तरु मूला। चली बिपति बारिधि अनुकूला॥ २ ॥
लखी नरेस बात फुरि साँची। तिय मिस मीचु सीस पर नाची॥
गहि पद बिनय कीन्ह बैठारी। जनि दिनकर कुल होसि कुठारी॥ ३ ॥
मागु माथ अबहीं देउँ तोही। राम बिरहँ जनि मारसि मोही॥
राखु राम कहुँ जेहि तेहि भाँती। नाहिं त जरिहि जनम भरि छाती॥ ४ ॥

So saying, the wicked woman rose and stood up as though it were a swollen stream of passion that had issued from the mountain of sin and, overflowing with the water of anger, was too terrible to look at. The two boons she had asked for represented its banks, her inexorable obstinacy corresponded to its (swift) current and the impelling force of Mantharā's words stood for its eddies; uprooting the king like a tree the river headed towards the ocean of adversity. The king now perceived that the demand of the queen was really true, and that it was death itself which was dancing over his head in the disguise of his own consort. Clasping her feet he persuaded her to sit down and implored her, "Pray do not play the axe with respect to the solar race. Ask of me my own head and I will forthwith give it to you; but kill me not by tearing Rāma from me. Retain Rāma by any means whatsoever, or your bosom will burn with anguish all your life." (1—4)

दो०—देखी ब्याधि असाधि नृपु परेउ धरनि धुनि माथ।
कहत परम आरत बचन राम राम रघुनाथ ॥ ३४ ॥

When the king saw the malady uncontrollable he dropped on the ground beating his head and sobbing out in most piteous tones, "Rāma, O Rāma, O Lord of Raghus!" (34)

चौ०—ब्याकुल राउ सिथिल सब गाता । करिनि कलपतरु मनहुँ निपाता ॥
कंठु सूख मुख आव न बानी । जनु पाठीनु दीन बिनु पानी ॥ १ ॥
पुनि कह कटु कठोर कैकेई । मनहुँ घाय महुँ माहुर देई ॥
जौं अंतहुँ अस करतबु रहेउ । मागु मागु तुम्ह केहिं बल कहेऊ ॥ २ ॥
दुइ कि होइ एक समय भुआला । हँसब ठठाइ फुलाउब गाला ॥
दानि कहाउब अरु कृपनाई । होइ कि खेम कुसल रौताई ॥ ३ ॥
छाड़हु बचनु कि धीरजु धरहू । जनि अबला जिमि करुना करहू ॥
तनु तिय तनय धामु धनु धरनी । सत्यसंध कहुँ तृन सम बरनी ॥ ४ ॥

The king was stricken with grief and his limbs began to droop; it looked as if a wish-yielding tree had been knocked down by a female elephant. His throat was dry and speech failed his lips; he felt miserable like a fish out of water. Kaikeyī plied him once more with pungent and harsh words, injecting poison as it were into his wound, "If this was what you intended doing in the long run, what emboldened you to say 'Ask, ask'? Can both these things happen at the same time, O sovereign of the earth,—to laugh a boisterous laugh and to look grave, to enjoy the reputation of being generous and yet be stingy? Is it possible to remain unscathed while playing the hero? Either go back upon your word or forbear; pray do not wail like a woman. Life and wife, sons, home, wealth and land have been spoken of as no better than a straw in the eyes of a man who is true to his word." (1—4)

दो०—मरम बचन सुनि राउ कह कहु कछु दोषु न तोर ।
लागेउ तोहि पिसाच जिमि कालु कहावत मोर ॥ ३५ ॥

On hearing these poignant words the king exclaimed, "Say what you will; you are not to blame for it. It is my doom which has possessed you like a devil and is using you as its mouthpiece. (35)

चौ०—चहत न भरत भूपतहि भोरें । बिधि बस कुमति बसी जिय तोरें ॥
सो सबु मोर पाप परिनामू । भयउ कुठाहर जेहिं बिधि बामू ॥ १ ॥
सुबस बसिहि फिरि अवध सुहाई । सब गुन धाम राम प्रभुताई ॥
करिहहिं भाइ सकल सेवकाई । होइहि तिहुँ पुर राम बड़ाई ॥ २ ॥
तोर कलंकु मोर पछिताऊ । मुएहुँ न मिटिहि न जाइहि काऊ ॥
अब तोहि नीक लाग करु सोई । लोचन ओट बैठु मुहु गोई ॥ ३ ॥
जब लगि जिऔं कहउँ कर जोरी । तब लगि जनि कछु कहसि बहोरी ॥
फिरि पछितैहसि अंत अभागी । मारसि गाइ नहारू लागी ॥ ४ ॥

"Bharata would never covet sovereignty even unwittingly. By the decree of fate, however, evil counsel has taken possession of your mind. All that is the outcome of my sins, due to which the tide has turned against me at an inopportune moment. Beautiful Ayodhyā shall flourish again under the sovereignty of Rāma, the abode of all virtues. All his brothers shall serve him and his fame shall spread through all the three spheres of creation. The stain on your reputation and my remorse shall not disappear even after our death and shall never go till eternity. Now do whatever pleases you; only keep out of my sight hiding your face. So long as I live, I beseech you with joined palms, pray speak not a word to me again. You will repent in the end, O hapless woman, that you killed a cow for the sake of gut."

(1—4)

दो०—परेउ राउ कहि कोटि बिधि काहे करसि निदानु ।
कपट सयानि न कहति कछु जागति मनहुँ मसानु ॥ ३६ ॥

Thus arguing with her in numberless ways the king dropped on the ground crying, "Why do you bring ruin to all?" But a pastmaster in wiles the queen did not utter a word as though busy performing magical rites in a crematorium (to acquire control over ghosts). (36)

चौ०—राम राम रट बिकल भुआलू । जनु बिनु पंख बिहंग बेहालू ॥
हृदयँ मनाव भोरु जनि होई । रामहि जाइ कहै जनि कोई ॥ १ ॥
उदउ करहु जनि रबि रघुकुल गुर । अवध बिलोकि सूल होइहि उर ॥
भूप प्रीति कैकइ कठिनाई । उभय अवधि बिधि रची बनाई ॥ २ ॥
बिलपत नृपहि भयउ भिनुसारा । बीना बेनु संख धुनि द्वारा ॥
पढ़हिं भाट गुन गावहिं गायक । सुनत नृपहि जनु लागहिं सायक ॥ ३ ॥
मंगल सकल सोहाहिं न कैसें । सहगामिनिहि बिभूषन जैसें ॥
तेहि निसि नीद परी नहिं काहू । राम दरस लालसा उछाहू ॥ ४ ॥

Stricken with grief the king repeated the word 'Rāma' again and again and felt miserable like a bird that has been shorn of its wings. He prayed in his heart, "May the day never dawn nor may anyone go and tell Rāma. Rise not, O sun-god, the progenitor of Raghu's race; for you will be pained at heart to see the plight of Ayodhyā." The king's affection and the relentlessness of Kaikeyī both were the highest of their kind in God's creation. While the king was yet wailing, the day broke and the music of lute, flute and conch was heard at his door. Bards extolled him and minstrels sang his praises; they, however, pierced the king like shafts as he heard them. These and other tokens of rejoicing pleased him not even as ornaments repel a widow who has decided to accompany her deceased husband to the other world. None could have a wink of sleep that night since everyone was eagerly longing for a sight of Śrī Rāma. (1—4)

दो०—द्वार भीर सेवक सचिव कहहिं उदित रबि देखि ।
जागेउ अजहुँ न अवधपति कारनु कवनु बिसेषि ॥ ३७ ॥

At the door waited a crowd of servants and ministers, who said to one another at the sight of the risen sun, "The Lord of Ayodhyā has not yet woken up, what special reason can there be? (37)

चौ०—पछिले पहर भूपु नित जागा। आजु हमहि बड़ अचरजु लागा॥
जाहु सुमंत्र जगावहु जाई। कीजिअ काजु रजायसु पाई॥ १॥
गए सुमंत्रु तब राउर माहीं। देखि भयावन जात डेराहीं॥
धाइ खाइ जनु जाइ न हेरा। मानहुँ बिपति बिषाद बसेरा॥ २॥
पूछें कोउ न ऊतरु देई। गए जेहिं भवन भूप कैकेई॥
कहि जयजीव बैठ सिरु नाई। देखि भूप गति गयउ सुखाई॥ ३॥
सोच बिकल बिबरन महि परेऊ। मानहुँ कमल मूलु परिहरेऊ॥
सचिउ सभीत सकइ नहिं पूँछी। बोली असुभ भरी सुभ छूछी॥ ४॥

"The king used to wake up during the last watch of the night every day; his behaviour today appears most strange to us. Getting into the palace, O Sumantra, you go and rouse him; on receiving his orders we may proceed with our work." Sumantra then entered the gynaeceum; but it wore such a dismal appearance that he was afraid to advance. It looked like a monster that would spring on him and devour him; its sight was so repelling. It seemed to be the very abode of calamity and sorrow. Since nobody answered his questions he proceeded to the apartment where the king and Queen Kaikeyī were. Greeting the king with the words "Be victorious and live for ever!" and bowing his head, he sat down. He turned pale to behold the condition of the king, who lay on the ground distracted with grief and colourless like a lotus stalk torn from its roots. The minister being too alarmed to ask any question, Kaikeyī, who was full of evil and void of all good, broke the silence. (1–4)

दो०—परी न राजहि नीद निसि हेतु जान जगदीसु।
रामु रामु रटि भोरु किय कहइ न मरमु महीसु॥ ३८॥

"The king had no sleep last night: Heaven alone knows the reason. He has been simply repeating "Rāma, Rāma" till daybreak and refuses to disclose the secret. (38)

चौ०—आनहु रामहि बेगि बोलाई। समाचार तब पूँछेहु आई॥
चलेउ सुमंत्रु राय रुख जानी। लखी कुचालि कीन्हि कछु रानी॥ १॥
सोच बिकल मग परइ न पाऊ। रामहि बोलि कहिहि का राऊ॥
उर धरि धीरजु गयउ दुआरें। पूँछहिं सकल देखि मनु मारें॥ २॥
समाधानु करि सो सबही का। गयउ जहाँ दिनकर कुल टीका॥
राम सुमंत्रहि आवत देखा। आदरु कीन्ह पिता सम लेखा॥ ३॥
निरखि बदनु कहि भूप रजाई। रघुकुलदीपहि चलेउ लेवाई॥
रामु कुभाँति सचिव सँग जाहीं। देखि लोग जहँ तहँ बिलखाहीं॥ ४॥

"Therefore, call on Rāma and bring him soon; thereafter, when you have come back, you may ask further details." Judging (from his master's looks) that the king approved of this idea, Sumantra left; he concluded that the queen had contrived some evil design. He felt so distressed with anxiety that his legs refused to move ahead. "What will the king speak to Rāma after calling him?" he wondered. Recovering himself he repaired to the gate; and seeing him disconsolate all began to question him. He, however, reassured them all and proceeded to the apartment where the Ornament of the solar race (Śrī Rāma) was. When Śrī Rāma saw Sumantra coming, He received him with honour, treating the minister on an equal footing with His father. Looking Śrī Rāma in the face, Sumantra conveyed to Him the royal command and returned with the Light of Raghu's race (Śrī Rāma). Śrī Rāma followed the minister in an unbecoming manner: people here and there were grieved to see this.

(1—4)

दो०—जाइ दीख रघुबंसमनि नरपति निपट कुसाजु ।
सहमि परेउ लखि सिंघिनिहि मनहुँ बृद्ध गजराजु ॥ ३९ ॥

The Jewel of Raghu's race went and saw the king in an utterly wretched state like an aged elephant who had dropped down in terror at the sight of a lioness. (39)

चौ०—सूखहिं अधर जरइ सबु अंगू । मनहुँ दीन मनिहीन भुअंगू ॥
सरुष समीप दीखि कैकेई । मानहुँ मीचु घरीं गनि लेई ॥ १ ॥
करुनामय मृदु राम सुभाऊ । प्रथम दीख दुखु सुना न काऊ ॥
तदपि धीर धरि समउ बिचारी । पूँछी मधुर बचन महतारी ॥ २ ॥
मोहि कहु मातु तात दुख कारन । करिअ जतन जेहिं होइ निवारन ॥
सुनहु राम सबु कारनु एहू । राजहि तुम्ह पर बहुत सनेहू ॥ ३ ॥
देन कहेन्हि मोहि दुइ बरदाना । मागेउँ जो कछु मोहि सोहाना ॥
सो सुनि भयउ भूप उर सोचू । छाड़ि न सकहिं तुम्हार सँकोचू ॥ ४ ॥

His lips got parched and his whole frame burned; he looked like a helpless snake bereft of the gem on its hood. The Lord beheld by the side of His father angry Kaikeyī, who stood there like Death personified counting the last minutes of his life. Śrī Rāma was compassionate and soft by nature; He witnessed sorrow for the first time in His life, He had never heard of it before. Yet, recovering Himself as the occasion demanded, addressed His stepmother in the following sweet words, "Tell me, dear mother, the cause of my father's distress, so that an attempt may be made to remove it." "Listen, Rāma; the sole cause is this: the king is very fond of you. He had promised me two boons of my choice and I asked whatever I liked. The king, however, was stricken with grief to hear my requests; for he cannot shake off the hesitation on your score.

(1—4)

दो०—सुत सनेहु इत बचनु उत संकट परेउ नरेसु ।
सकहु त आयसु धरहु सिर मेटहु कठिन कलेसु ॥ ४० ॥

"Love for his son on one side and his plighted word on the other: the king is placed on the horns of a dilemma. Obey his command if you can, and rid him of a severe mental torture." (40)

चौ०—निधरक बैठि कहइ कटु बानी । सुनत कठिनता अति अकुलानी ॥
जीभ कमान बचन सर नाना । मनहुँ महिप मृदु लच्छ समाना ॥ १ ॥
जनु कठोरपनु धरें सरीरू । सिखइ धनुषबिद्या बर बीरू ॥
सबु प्रसंगु रघुपतिहि सुनाई । बैठि मनहुँ तनु धरि निठुराई ॥ २ ॥
मन मुसुकाइ भानुकुल भानू । रामु सहज आनंद निधानू ॥
बोले बचन बिगत सब दूषन । मृदु मंजुल जनु बाग बिभूषन ॥ ३ ॥
सुनु जननी सोइ सुतु बड़भागी । जो पितु मातु बचन अनुरागी ॥
तनय मातु पितु तोषनिहारा । दुर्लभ जननि सकल संसारा ॥ ४ ॥

Kaikeyī unhesitatingly spoke these pungent words, which callousness itself was sore distressed to hear. With the tongue for a bow, and words for so many shafts and with the king for a delicate target as it were, it looked as if stiffness had taken the form of a great hero and practised bowmanship. Having communicated the whole incident to the Lord of Raghus (Śrī Rāma), she sat like the very incarnation of heartlessness. The Sun of the solar dynasty, Śrī Rāma, the natural fountain of joy, smiled within Himself and spoke words which were free from all blemish and were so sweet and agreeable that they seemed to be the very ornaments of speech: "Listen, mother: that son alone is blessed, who is devoted to the words of his parents. A son who gratifies his father and mother is rare in this wide world, mother. (1—4)

दो०—मुनिगन मिलनु बिसेषि बन सबहि भाँति हित मोर ।
तेहि महँ पितु आयसु बहुरि संमत जननी तोर ॥ ४१ ॥

"In the forest I shall get more frequent opportunities of meeting hermits, which will be beneficial to me in every way. On top of it I have my father's command and your approval to boot, mother. (41)

चौ०—भरतु प्रानप्रिय पावहिं राजू । बिधि सब बिधि मोहि सनमुख आजू ॥
जौं न जाउँ बन ऐसेहु काजा । प्रथम गनिअ मोहि मूढ़ समाजा ॥ १ ॥
सेवहिं अरँडु कलपतरु त्यागी । परिहरि अमृत लेहिं बिषु मागी ॥
तेउ न पाइ अस समउ चुकाहीं । देखु बिचारि मातु मन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
अंब एक दुखु मोहि बिसेषी । निपट बिकल नरनायकु देखी ॥
थोरिहिं बात पितहि दुख भारी । होति प्रतीति न मोहि महतारी ॥ ३ ॥
राउ धीर गुन उदधि अगाधू । भा मोहि तें कछु बड़ अपराधू ॥
जातें मोहि न कहत कछु राऊ । मोरि सपथ तोहि कहु सतिभाऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"Again, Bharata, who is dear to me as life, will get the sovereignty; God is propitious to me in every respect today. If I refuse to proceed to the

woods even under such circumstances, I should be reckoned foremost in an assembly of fools. Those who nurture a castor-oil plant leaving the tree of paradise and barter away nectar for poison, they too will not lose an opportunity like this should they ever get it: ponder this fact in your mind and realize it, mother. Only one thing pains me most, mother: I am grieved to see the king sore distressed. That my father should be so overwhelmed with grief over a trifling matter is more than I can believe, dear mother. The king is stout of heart and a fathomless ocean of goodness; I must have committed some great offence, which prevents the king from speaking out his mind to me. I adjure you, therefore, to tell me the truth." (1—4)

दो०—सहज सरल रघुबर बचन कुमति कुटिल करि जान ।
चलइ जोंक जल बक्रगति जद्यपि सलिलु समान ॥ ४२ ॥

The words of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus) were artless and straightforward, yet the evil-minded Kaikeyī gave them a perverse twist. A leech must always move obliquely even though the water on which it moves has a smooth surface. (42)

चौ०—रहसी रानि राम रुख पाई । बोली कपट सनेहु जनाई ॥
सपथ तुम्हार भरत कै आना । हेतु न दूसर मैं कछु जाना ॥ १ ॥
तुम्ह अपराध जोगु नहिं ताता । जननी जनक बंधु सुखदाता ॥
राम सत्य सबु जो कछु कहहू । तुम्ह पितु मातु बचन रत अहहू ॥ २ ॥
पितहि बुझाइ कहहु बलि सोई । चौथेंपन जेहिं अजसु न होई ॥
तुम्ह सम सुअन सुकृत जेहिं दीन्हे । उचित न तासु निरादरु कीन्हे ॥ ३ ॥
लागहिं कुमुख बंचन सुभ कैसे । मगहँ गयादिक तीरथ जैसे ॥
रामहि मातु बचन सब भाए । जिमि सुरसरि गत सलिल सुहाए ॥ ४ ॥

The queen rejoiced to find Śrī Rāma inclined towards her proposal and said with a false show of affection, "I swear by yourself and Bharata that no other cause of the king's affliction is known to me. You are hardly capable of any offence, dear son, a source of delight that you are to your parents and brothers. What you say is all true; you are devoted to the words of your father and mother. I adjure you to argue with your father that he may not incur opprobrium in the evening of his life. It is hardly desirable for him to disregard the virtues (truthfulness etc.) that have fetched him a son like you." These polite words adorned her detestable mouth even as sacred spots like Gaya beautify the accursed land of Magadha (South Bihar). All these words from His stepmother sounded pleasant to Rāma in the same way as waters of all kinds are hallowed through their confluence with the holy Gangā. (1—4)

दो०—गइ मुरुछा रामहि सुमिरि नृप फिरि करवट लीन्ह ।
सचिव राम आगमन कहि बिनय समय सम कीन्ह ॥ ४३ ॥

The king's spell of unconsciousness now left him; he remembered Rāma and then changed sides. And the minister (Sumantra) informed him of Śrī

Rāma's arrival and made humble submission to him in words appropriate to the occasion. (43)

चौ०—अवनिप अकनि रामु पगु धारे। धरि धीरजु तब नयन उघारे॥
सचिवँ सँभारि राउ बैठारे। चरन परत नृप रामु निहारे॥ १॥
लिए सनेह बिकल उर लाई। गै मनि मनहुँ फनिक फिरि पाई॥
रामहि चितइ रहेउ नरनाहू। चला बिलोचन बारि प्रबाहू॥ २॥
सोक बिबस कछु कहै न पारा। हृदयँ लगावत बारहिं बारा॥
बिधिहि मनाव राउ मन माहीं। जेहिं रघुनाथ न कानन जाहीं॥ ३॥
सुमिरि महेसहि कहइ निहोरी। बिनती सुनहु सदासिव मोरी॥
आसुतोष तुम्ह अवढर दानी। आरति हरहु दीन जनु जानी॥ ४॥

Hearing that Śrī Rāma had come, the king recovered himself and opened his eyes. The minister (Sumantra) helped his sovereign to a sitting posture, when the latter beheld Rāma falling at his feet. Overwhelmed with emotion the king clasped Him to his bosom as though a serpent had regained its lost gem. The monarch kept gazing on Śrī Rāma and a torrent of tears streamed forth from his eyes. Overpowered with grief he could not utter a word and pressed the prince to his heart again and again. He inwardly prayed to God that the Lord of Raghus (Śrī Rāma) might not be able to proceed to the woods. Invoking the mighty Lord Śiva he solicited Him saying, "Hear my prayer, O ever-blissful Lord! Quickly pleased and indiscreetly generous as You are, pray relieve my affliction knowing me to be in distress. (1—4)

दो०—तुम्ह प्रेरक सब के हृदयँ सो मति रामहि देहु।
बचनु मोर तजि रहहिं घर परिहरि सीलु सनेहु॥ ४४॥

"Dwelling as You do in the heart of all as the prompter of actions, so inspire Rāma that he may flout my word and stay at home casting to the wind all sense of propriety and filial affection. (44)

चौ०—अजसु होउ जग सुजसु नसाऊ। नरक परौं बरु सुरपुरु जाऊ॥
सब दुख दुसह सहावहु मोही। लोचन ओट रामु जनि होंही॥ १॥
अस मन गुनइ राउ नहिं बोला। पीपर पात सरिस मनु डोला॥
रघुपति पितहि प्रेमबस जानी। पुनि कछु कहिहि मातु अनुमानी॥ २॥
देस काल अवसर अनुसारी। बोले बचन बिनीत बिचारी॥
तात कहउँ कछु करउँ ढिठाई। अनुचितु छमब जानि लरिकाई॥ ३॥
अति लघु बात लागि दुखु पावा। काहुँ न मोहि कहि प्रथम जनावा॥
देखि गोसाइँहि पूँछिउँ माता। सुनि प्रसंगु भए सीतल गाता॥ ४॥

"Let world-wide disrepute be my lot and let my good name perish; I would fain be damned to perdition and forgo heaven (the abode of immortals). Subject me to all severe hardships; but let not Rāma be screened from my view." The king thus prayed within his heart but did not open his lips; his

mind quivered like an aspen leaf. Perceiving that His father was overpowered with affection, and apprehending that mother Kaikeyī might utter something again, the Lord of Raghus (Śrī Rāma) spoke after due deliberation words which were not only humble but also suited to the place, time and circumstances. "Dear father, I make bold to submit something; pray forgive this impropriety on my part knowing that I am yet tender of age. You have suffered for a most trifling matter; and the pity of it is that nobody apprized me of it before. When I saw you I asked mother Kaikeyī and was consoled to hear what she has told me. (1--4)

दो०—मंगल समय सनेह बस सोच परिहरिअ तात ।
आयसु देइअ हरषि हियँ कहि पुलके प्रभु गात ॥ ४५ ॥

"Grieve not out of affection at a time of rejoicing, dear father, and command me with a glad heart." The Lord felt a thrill of joy all over his body as He spoke these words. (45)

चौ०—धन्य जनमु जगतीतल तासू । पितहि प्रमोदु चरित सुनि जासू ॥
चारि पदारथ करतल ताकें । प्रिय पितु मातु प्रान सम जाकें ॥ १ ॥
आयसु पालि जनम फलु पाई । ऐहउँ बेगिहिं होउ रजाई ॥
बिदा मातु सन आवउँ मागी । चलिहउँ बनहि बहुरि पग लागी ॥ २ ॥
अस कहि राम गवनु तब कीन्हा । भूप सोक बस उतरु न दीन्हा ॥
नगर ब्यापि गइ बात सुतीछी । छुअत चढ़ी जनु सब तन बीछी ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि भए बिकल सकल नर नारी । बेलि बिटप जिमि देखि दवारी ॥
जो जहँ सुनइ धुनइ सिरु सोई । बड़ बिषादु नहिं धीरजु होई ॥ ४ ॥

"Blessed is his birth on the surface of this earth, whose father is rejoiced to hear of his doings. He has in his hand all the four prizes of life, (viz., religious merit, material riches, sensuous gratification and final beatitude), to whom his parents are dear as life. After carrying out your order and having obtained the reward of my life I shall come back soon; therefore be pleased to command me. In the meantime I shall ask leave of mother Kausalyā and return forthwith; then I shall proceed to the woods after throwing myself once more at your feet." So spoke Śrī Rāma and then departed; while the king was too overpowered with grief to make any answer. This most unwelcome news spread throughout the city as though the sting of a scorpion had circulated its poison throughout the body. Every man and woman who heard this was distressed even as trees and creepers are blasted at the very sight of a forest fire. Whoever heard it beat his head wherever he happened to be; the grief was too great to be borne. (1—4)

दो०—मुख सुखाहिं लोचन स्रवहिं सोकु न हृदयँ समाइ ।
मनहुँ करुन रस कटकई उतरी अवध बजाइ ॥ ४६ ॥

Their mouths were parched, their eyes streamed and their heart could not contain their sorrow; it seemed as though the army of Pathos had openly pitched its camp at Ayodhyā. (46)

चौ०—मिलेहि माझ बिधि बात बेगारी । जहँ तह देहिं कैकइहि गारी ॥
एहि पापिनिहि बूझि का परेऊ । छाइ भवन पर पावकु धरेऊ ॥ १ ॥
निज कर नयन काढ़ि चह दीखा । डारि सुधा बिषु चाहत चीखा ॥
कुटिल कठोर कुबुद्धि अभागी । भइ रघुबंस बेनु बन आगी ॥ २ ॥
पालव बैठि पेड़ु एहिं काटा । सुख महुँ सोक ठाटु धरि ठाटा ॥
सदा रामु एहि प्रान समाना । कारन कवन कुटिलपनु ठाना ॥ ३ ॥
सत्य कहहिं कबि नारि सुभाऊ । सब बिधि अगहु अगाध दुराऊ ॥
निज प्रतिबिंबु बरुकु गहि जाई । जानि न जाइ नारि गति भाई ॥ ४ ॥

"When everything was ready, God upset the whole plan !" Everywhere people abused Kaikeyī. "What sense could there be in this wicked woman having set fire to a house that had been newly thatched ! She seeks to perceive after tearing out her eyes with her own hands, and wishes to taste poison throwing away nectar. This crooked, hard-hearted and evil-minded wretch has appeared as fire to burn the cluster of bamboos in the shape of Raghu's race. Sitting on a twig she has hewn the tree itself; in the midst of joy she has raised a structure of sorrow Śrī Rāma had always been dear to her as life: what has led her to resort to such perversity ? Seers have truly said that a woman's mind is altogether incomprehensible, unfathomable and shrouded in mystery. Sooner may a man catch his own reflection than know the ways of a woman. (1—4)

दो०—काह न पावकु जारि सक का न समुद्र समाइ ।
का न करै अबला प्रबल केहि जग कालु न खाइ ॥ ४७ ॥

"What is there that fire cannot consume; what is there that cannot be engulfed by the ocean ? What is there that a powerful woman, miscalled powerless (Abalā) in common parlance, cannot accomplish and what creature is there in this perishable world, that death cannot devour ? (47)

चौ०—का सुनाइ बिधि काह सुनावा । का देखाइ चह काह देखावा ॥
एक कहहिं भल भूप न कीन्हा । बरु बिचारि नहिं कुमतिहि दीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
जो हठि भयउ सकल दुख भाजनु । अबला बिबस ग्यानु गुनु गा जनु ॥
एक धरम परमिति पहिचाने । नृपहि दोसु नहिं देहिं सयाने ॥ २ ॥
सिबि दधीचि हरिचंद कहानी । एक एक सन कहहिं बखानी ॥
एक भरत कर संमत कहहीं । एक उदास भायँ सुनि रहहीं ॥ ३ ॥
कान मूदि कर रद गहि जीहा । एक कहहिं यह बात अलीहा ॥
सुकृत जाहिं अस कहत तुम्हारे । रामु भरत कहुँ प्रानपिआरे ॥ ४ ॥

"Having first ordained one thing the Creator has now ordained quite the reverse of it; having shown us one spectacle he would now show us quite another." Some people said, "The king has not done well; he has not been discreet in granting the wicked woman her request, whereby he has wilfully courted all this tragedy. By allowing himself to be ruled by a woman he has

lost his wisdom and goodness as it were." Others who were saner did not blame the king, recognizing as they did his high standard of morality. They repeated at length to one another the narratives of Śibi, Dadhīchi and Harischandra*. Some suggested Bharata's connivance, while still others passively heard what their companions said. Others stopped their ears with their hands and bit their tongue as they exclaimed, "This is untrue. All your merits will be destroyed as you utter these words: Śrī Rāma is dear to Bharata as his own life.
(1—4)

दो०—चंदु चवै बरु अनल कन सुधा होइ बिषतूल ।
सपनेहुँ कबहुँ न करहिं किछु भरतु राम प्रतिकूल ॥ ४८ ॥

"Sooner shall the moon rain sparks of fire or nectar have the same effect as poison than Bharata ever dream of doing anything prejudicial to the interests of Śrī Rāma."
(48)

चौ०—एक बिधातहि दूषनु देहीं । सुधा देखाइ दीन्ह बिषु जेहीं ॥
खरभरु नगर सोचु सब काहू । दुसह दाहु उर मिटा उछाहू ॥ १ ॥
बिप्रबधू कुलमान्य जठेरी । जे प्रिय परम कैकई केरी ॥
लगीं देन सिख सीलु सराही । बचन बानसम लागहिं ताही ॥ २ ॥
भरतु न मोहि प्रिय राम समाना । सदा कहहु यहु सबु जगु जाना ॥
करहु राम पर सहज सनेहू । केहिं अपराध आजु बनु देहू ॥ ३ ॥
कबहुँ न कियहु सवति आरेसू । प्रीति प्रतीति जान सबु देसू ॥
कौसल्याँ अब काह बिगारा । तुम्ह जेहि लागि बज्र पुर पारा ॥ ४ ॥

Some blamed the Creator, who had offered nectar but actually given them poison. The whole city was astir and everyone felt distressed. There was deep agony in their heart and their briskness was gone. Brahman matrons and other venerable and elderly ladies of the royal family and such other ladies as were most dear to Kaikeyī began to expostulate with her praising her amiability; but their words pierced her like shafts. "You have always said, and the whole world knows it, that Bharata is not so dear to you as Rāma. You have borne natural affection towards Rāma; for what offence do you exile him to the woods today? You have never harboured jealousy towards your co-wives; your loving disposition and credulity are known throughout the land. What wrong has Kausalyā done you now due to which you should have hurled this thunderbolt against the whole city.
(1—4)

* Hariśchandra, son of Triśanku, was a king of Ayodhyā and the twenty-eighth in descent from Ikṣwāku, the founder of the solar dynasty. In order to satisfy the claims of the sage Viśwāmitra, who wanted to test his integrity, he parted with his kingdom and all that he had, sold his wife and only son and hired himself out as the employee of a pariah who kept a burning ghat. Whenever a dead body was brought for cremation there, Hariśchandra used to recover the toll and make it over to his master. One day it so happened that a snake bit his only son, Rohita, and the ex-queen brought the dead prince for cremation to the same ghat. Even though the ex-king recognized them to be his own wife and child, he would not allow the child to be burnt without recovering the usual toll. At last the penniless woman offered to part with the rag with which she had covered her shame and the heartless ex-monarch was going to strip her naked when the gods interposed and restored the pious king to his throne and all his former prosperity.

दो०—सीय कि पिय सँगु परिहरिहि लखनु कि रहिहहिं धाम ।
राजु कि भूँजब भरत पुर नृपु कि जिइहि बिनु राम ॥ ४९ ॥

"Will Sītā forgo the company of Śrī Rāma or Lakṣmaṇa choose to stay at home? Will Bharata enjoy the sovereignty of Ayodhyā or the king survive without Rāma? (49)

चौ०—अस बिचारि उर छाड़हु कोहू । सोक कलंक कोठि जनि होहू ॥
भरतहि अवसि देहु जुबराजू । कानन काह राम कर काजू ॥ १ ॥
नाहिन रामु राज के भूखे । धरम धुरीन बिषय रस रूखे ॥
गुर गृह बसहुँ रामु तजि गेहू । नृप सन अस बरु दूसर लेहू ॥ २ ॥
जौं नहिं लगिहहु कहें हमारे । नहिं लागिहि कछु हाथ तुम्हारे ॥
जौं परिहास कीन्हि कछु होई । तौ कहि प्रगट जनावहु सोई ॥ ३ ॥
राम सरिस सुत कानन जोगू । काह कहिहि सुनि तुम्ह कहुँ लोगू ॥
उठहु बेगि सोइ करहु उपाई । जेहि बिधि सोकु कलंकु नसाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Pondering thus banish anger from your breast nor make yourself a storehouse of grief and infamy. By all means instal Bharata as the Prince-Regent; but what need is there for exiling Rāma to the forest? Rāma is not covetous of sovereignty; he is a champion of righteousness and has no relish for sensuous pleasures. Let Rāma abandon his home and live with his preceptor: ask this of the king as your second boon. In case you do not follow our advice, you will gain nothing. If you have only played some joke, let us know by openly declaring it. Does a son like Rāma deserve to be exiled to the woods? What will the world say about you when they hear of it? Up quickly and devise some means to avert grief and obloquy (1—4)

छं०—जेहि भाँति सोकु कलंकु जाइ उपाय करि कुल पालही ।
हठि फेरु रामहि जात बन जनि बात दूसरि चालही ॥
जिमि भानु बिनु दिनु प्रान बिनु तनु चंद बिनु जिमि जामिनी ।
तिमि अवध तुलसीदास प्रभु बिनु समुझि धौं जियँ भामिनी ॥

"Devise some means to avert grief and infamy and save your family. Forcibly dissuade Rāma from proceeding to the woods and make no other suggestion. As the day without the sun, as the body without life and the night without the moon, so the city of Ayodhyā without the Lord of Tulasidasa, Śrī Rāma! just consider this, O irascible lady."

सो०—सखिन्ह सिखावनु दीन्ह सुनत मधुर परिनाम हित ।
तेइँ कछु कान न कीन्ह कुटिल प्रबोधी कूबरी ॥ ५० ॥

The advice that Kaikeyī's friends gave her was agreeable to hear and salutary in consequence. But she gave no ear to it, tutored as she was by the mischievous humpback. (50)

चौ०—उतरु न देइ दुसह रिस रूखी । मृगिन्ह चितव जनु बाघिनि भूखी ॥
ब्याधि असाधि जानि तिन्ह त्यागी । चलीं कहत मतिमंद अभागी ॥ १ ॥
राजु करत यह दैअँ बिगोई । कीन्हेसि अस जस करइ न कोई ॥
एहि बिधि बिलपहिं पुर नर नारीं । देहिं कुचालिहि कोटिक गारीं ॥ २ ॥
जरहिं बिषम जर लेहिं उसासा । कवनि राम बिनु जीवन आसा ॥
बिपुल बियोग प्रजा अकुलानी । जनु जलचर गन सूखत पानी ॥ ३ ॥
अति बिषाद बस लोग लोगाईं । गए मातु पहिं रामु गोसाईं ॥
मुख प्रसन्न चित चौगुन चाऊ । मिटा सोचु जनि राखै राऊ ॥ ४ ॥

She gave no reply and wore a sullen look due to anger that could not be easily curbed. She stared at them as a hungry tigress would gaze on a herd of does. Finding her disease incurable her friends gave her up saying as they went, "Wretched fool! Fate could not brook her sovereignty and has betrayed her. She has done what nobody else would do." Men and women of the city thus lamented and showered numberless abuses on the wicked woman. They burned with terrible agony and sighed. "There can be no hope of life without Rāma," they said. The people were disconcerted at the thought of long separation even as aquatic creatures get disturbed when water in which they live begins to fail. Men and women alike were overcome with excessive grief. In the meantime Lord Śrī Rāma called on His mother (Kausalyā). He wore a cheerful look and had fourfold joy in his heart; He no longer feared lest the king should detain him. (1–4)

दो०—नव गयंदु रघुबीर मनु राजु अलान समान ।
छूट जानि बन गवनु सुनि उर अनंदु अधिकान ॥ ५१ ॥

The mind of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's race) resembled a young elephant (newly caught) with kingship for its chain. When He heard of the proposal for exiling Him to the forest He took Himself as freed and felt overjoyed in His heart. (51)

चौ०—रघुकुलतिलक जोरि दोउ हाथा । मुदित मातु पद नायउ माथा ॥
दीन्हि असीस लाइ उर लीन्हे । भूषन बसन निछावरि कीन्हे ॥ १ ॥
बार बार मुख चुंबति माता । नयन नेह जलु पुलकित गाता ॥
गोद राखि पुनि हृदयँ लगाए । स्रवत प्रेमरस पयद सुहाए ॥ २ ॥
प्रेमु प्रमोदु न कछु कहि जाई । रंक धनद पदबी जनु पाई ॥
सादर सुंदर बदनु निहारी । बोली मधुर बचन महतारी ॥ ३ ॥
कहहु तात जननी बलिहारी । कबहिं लगन मुद मंगलकारी ॥
सुकृत सील सुख सीवँ सुहाई । जनम लाभ कइ अवधि अघाई ॥ ४ ॥

The Crown of Raghu's race, Śrī Rāma, joined both His palms and cheerfully bowed His head at His mother's feet. She blessed Him and clasped Him to her bosom and scattered jewels and raiment around Him (in order to protect Him from evil). The mother kissed His lips again and again

with tears of affection in her eyes and her limbs thrilling over with joy. Seating Him in her lap she pressed Him once more to her heart, while milk flowed from her graceful breasts due to excess of love. Her affection and joy were altogether beyond description; it seemed as if a pauper had attained the position of Kubera (the god of riches). Fondly regarding His lovely countenance the mother spoke to Him in endearing terms; "Tell me, dear child,—I beseech you;—when will be that delightful and auspicious hour, the beautiful culmination of piety, virtue and joy and the highest reward of human birth,—

(1—4)

दो०—जेहि चाहत नर नारि सब अति आरत एहि भाँति ।
जिमि चातक चातकि तृषित बृष्टि सरद रितु स्वाति ॥ ५२ ॥

—"And for which all men and women long as anxiously as a thirsty pair of Chātaka birds for an autumnal shower during the brief period when the sun is in the same longitude as the constellation named Swāti (the Arcturus)? (52)

चौ०—तात जाउँ बलि बेगि नहाहू । जो मन भाव मधुर कछु खाहू ॥
पितु समीप तब जाएहु भैआ । भइ बड़ि बार जाइ बलि मैआ ॥ १ ॥
मातु बचन सुनि अति अनुकूला । जनु सनेह सुरतरु के फूला ॥
सुख मकरंद भरे श्रियमूला । निरखि राम मनु भवँरु न भूला ॥ २ ॥
धरम धुरीन धरम गति जानी । कहेउ मातु सन अति मृदु बानी ॥
पिताँ दीन्ह मोहि कानन राजू । जहँ सब भाँति मोर बड़ काजू ॥ ३ ॥
आयसु देहि मुदित मन माता । जेहिं मुद मंगल कानन जाता ॥
जनि सनेह बस डरपसि भोरें । आनँदु अंब अनुग्रह तोरें ॥ ४ ॥

"I adjure you, my darling, to bathe quickly and take some sweet dish of your choice. See your father after that, my boy; for I protest it is already too late." Even on hearing these most agreeable words of His mother, which were blossoms as it were of the celestial tree of affection, laden with the honey of joy and fountains of worldly prosperity, the bee of Śrī Rāma's mind could not be lured by their charm. A champion of righteousness that He was, He clearly discerned the path of duty and spoke to His mother in exceedingly polite terms, "Father has bestowed on me the kingdom of the forest, where there will be great opportunities for me in every way. Therefore, grant me leave with a cheerful heart, so that my journey to the forest may be attended with joy and blessing. Be not obsessed with erroneous fears due to affection, dear mother; by your goodwill I shall be ever happy.

(1—4)

दो०—बरष चारिदस बिपिन बसि करि पितु बचन प्रमान ।
आइ पाय पुनि देखिहउँ मनु जनि करसि मलान ॥ ५३ ॥

"Spending four years and ten in the forest and having obeyed my father's commands I will come back and behold your feet again; be not sad at heart." (53)

चौ०—बचन बिनीत मधुर रघुबर के। सर सम लगे मातु उर करके॥
सहमि सूखि सुनि सीतलि बानी। जिमि जवास परें पावस पानी॥ १॥
कहि न जाइ कछु हृदय बिषादू। मनहुँ मृगी सुनि केहरि नादू॥
नयन सजल तन थर थर काँपी। माजहि खाइ मीन जनु मापी॥ २॥
धरि धीरजु सुत बदनु निहारी। गदगद बचन कहति महतारी॥
तात पितहि तुम्ह प्रानपिआरे। देखि मुदित नित चरित तुम्हारे॥ ३॥
राजु देन कहुँ सुभ दिन साधा। कहेउ जान बन केहिं अपराधा॥
तात सुनावहु मोहि निदानू। को दिनकर कुल भयउ कृसानू॥ ४॥

The gentle and sweet words of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of the Raghus) pierced the mother's heart and rankled there. Alarmed to hear His serene speech she turned pale in the same way as the Yavāsaka plant is blasted by a shower in the monsoon. The agony of her heart was beyond description like that of a doe that has heard a lion's roar Her eyes were wet with tears and her body violently shook like a fish that had got inebriated by sucking the scum raised by the first monsoon shower. Recovering herself and looking her son in the face the mother spoke in faltering accents, "My boy, you are dear as life to your father, to whom it is a constant delight to watch your doings from day to day. He had got an auspicious day fixed for installing you as the prince-regent; for what offence has he asked you to proceed to the woods? Let me know the reason, my darling: who is it that has served as fire to consume the solar race?" (1—4)

दो०—निरखि राम रुख सचिवसुत कारनु कहेउ बुझाइ।
सुनि प्रसंगु रहि मूक जिमि दसा बरनि नहिं जाइ॥ ५४॥

Reading in Śrī Rāma's eyes His tacit consent Sumantra's son (who had obviously accompanied the Prince) explained the reason. The mother was struck dumb as it were to hear the episode; the state of her mind could not be described in words. (54)

चौ०—राखि न सकइ न कहि सक जाहू। दुहूँ भाँति उर दारुन दाहू॥
लिखत सुधाकर गा लिखि राहू। बिधि गति बाम सदा सब काहू॥ १॥
धरम सनेह उभयँ मति घेरी। भइ गति साँप छुछुंदरि केरी॥
राखउँ सुतहि करउँ अनुरोधू। धरमु जाइ अरु बंधु बिरोधू॥ २॥
कहउँ जान बन तौ बड़ि हानी। संकट सोच बिबस भइ रानी॥
बहुरि समुझि तिय धरमु सयानी। रामु भरतु दोउ सुत सम जानी॥ ३॥
सरल सुभाउ राम महतारी। बोली बचन धीर धरि भारी॥
तात जाउँ बलि कीन्हेहु नीका। पितु आयसु सब धरमक टीका॥ ४॥

She could neither detain her Son nor yet say 'Go'; she felt terrible agony in her heart in either event. "It seemed as though one was going to write 'moon' and wrote 'Rāhu' (the demon who is believed by the Hindus to

devour the moon during a lunar eclipse) instead through a slip of the pen,'' she said to herself. "The ways of the Creator (Brahmā) are always adverse to all,'' she concluded. Kausalyā's judgment was swayed on the one hand by her sense of duty and on the other by her affection. She found herself on the horns of a dilemma like a snake that has caught hold of a musk-rat*. "If I press my son and detain him, the moral code will be violated and bad blood created between brothers. And if I allow him to proceed to the woods, it will be a grievous loss.'' The queen thus found herself faced with an embarrassing situation and was overwhelmed with grief. Again, realizing the duty of a woman and remembering that both Rāma and Bharata were equally her sons the prudent Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother), who had a guileless disposition, spoke as follows with great courage, "You have done well, my child, I swear; a father's command is the most sacred of all obligations. (1—4)

दो०—राजु देन कहि दीन्ह बनु मोहि न सो दुख लेसु ।
तुम्ह बिनु भरतहि भूपतिहि प्रजहि प्रचंड कलेसु ॥ ५५ ॥

"That having promised to bestow on you the kingdom of Ayodhyā your father has now decided to exile you to the woods does not make me the least sorry. But your absence from our midst will mean a terrible ordeal to Bharata, to the king himself and to the people. (55)

चौ०—जौं केवल पितु आयसु ताता । तौ जनि जाहु जानि बड़ि माता ॥
जौं पितु मातु कहेउ बन जाना । तौ कानन सत अवध समाना ॥ १ ॥
पितु बनदेव मातु बनदेवी । खग मृग चरन सरोरुह सेवी ॥
अंतहुँ उचित नृपहि बनबासू । बय बिलोकि हियँ होइ हराँसू ॥ २ ॥
बड़भागी बनु अवध अभागी । जो रघुबंसतिलक तुम्ह त्यागी ॥
जौं सुत कहौं संग मोहि लेहू । तुम्हरे हृदयँ होइ संदेहू ॥ ३ ॥
पूत परम प्रिय तुम्ह सबही के । प्रान प्रान के जीवन जी के ॥
ते तुम्ह कहहु मातु बन जाऊँ । मैं सुनि बचन बैठि पछिताऊँ ॥ ४ ॥

"In any case if it be your father's command alone, my boy, then go not, remembering that a mother ranks higher than one's father. If, on the other hand, both father and mother have asked you to proceed to the woods then, of course, the forest will equal a hundred cities like Ayodhyā, with the sylvan gods for your father, the sylvan goddesses for your mother and the birds and beasts to wait upon your lotus feet. At all events it is but proper for a king to dwell in a forest in the evening of his life; it is your tender age which fills my heart with agony. How blessed is the forest and how luckless Ayodhyā, that will be deserted by you, O crown of Raghu's

* It is popularly believed in India that if a snake once catches hold of a musk-rat mistaking it for an ordinary rat and later discovers its identity, it can neither devour it nor disgorge it. For if it devours it, it is sure to die; and if it disgorges it, it goes blind.

line! If I ask you, my boy, to take me with you, your mind will be filled with doubt. You are supremely dear to all, my child; you are the life of our life, the vitality of our soul. As such you say, "Mother, I go to the forest!" while I remain rooted to my seat even on hearing these words and repent. (1—4)

दो०—यह बिचारि नहिं करउँ हठ झूठ सनेहु बढ़ाइ ।
मानि मातु कर नात बलि सुरति बिसरि जनि जाइ ॥ ५६ ॥

"Realizing this I do not press my suit exaggerating my false love. I only pray that remembering me as a mother you should not allow me to slip out of your mind. (56)

चौ०—देव पितर सब तुम्हहि गोसाईं । राखहुँ पलक नयन की नाईं ॥
अवधि अंबु प्रिय परिजन मीना । तुम्ह करुनाकर धरम धुरीना ॥ १ ॥
अस बिचारि सोइ करहु उपाई । सबहि जिअत जेहिं भेंटहु आई ॥
जाहु सुखेन बनहि बलि जाऊँ । करि अनाथ जन परिजन गाऊँ ॥ २ ॥
सब कर आजु सुकृत फल बीता । भयउ कराल कालु बिपरीता ॥
बहु बिधि बिलपि चरन लपटानी । परम अभागिनि आपुहि जानी ॥ ३ ॥
दारुन दुसह दाहु उर ब्यापा । बरनि न जाहिं बिलाप कलापा ॥
राम उठाइ मातु उर लाई । कहि मृदु बचन बहुरि समुझाई ॥ ४ ॥

"May all the gods and manes protect you, O lord of the earth, as the eyelids protect the eyes. The term of exile is like water, while your near and dear ones resemble the fish that live on it; as for yourself you are a fountain of mercy and a champion of virtue. Remembering this please devise some means to see that you come back in time to find them all alive. I adjure you to proceed to the woods in good cheer abandoning your servants, family and the whole city. The fruit of everyone's meritorious deeds is exhausted today and the tide of fortune has turned against us, assuming a sullen aspect." Thus wailing in many ways mother Kausalyā clung to Śrī Rāma's feet accounting herself the most unlucky woman. Her heart was filled with terrible and deep agony and the profusion of wailings was beyond all description. Śrī Rāma lifted His mother and pressed her to His bosom, and then comforted her with soothing words. (1—4)

दो०—समाचार तेहि समय सुनि सीय उठी अकुलाइ ।
जाइ सासु पद कमल जुग बंदि बैठि सिरु नाइ ॥ ५७ ॥

That very moment Sītā heard the news and rose in great agitation. She approached Her mother-in-law, reverenced her lotus feet and sat down bowing Her head. (57)

चौ०—दीन्हि असीस सासु मृदु बानी । अति सुकुमारि देखि अकुलानी ॥
बैठि नमितमुख सोचति सीता । रूप रासि पति प्रेम पुनीता ॥ १ ॥
चलन चहत बन जीवननाथू । केहि सुकृती सन होइहि साथू ॥
की तनु प्रान कि केवल प्राना । बिधि करतबु कछु जाइ न जाना ॥ २ ॥

चारु चरन नख लेखति धरनी । नूपुर मुखर मधुर कबि बरनी ॥
मनहुँ प्रेम बस बिनती करहीं । हमहि सीय पद जनि परिहरहीं ॥ ३ ॥
मंजु बिलोचन मोचति बारी । बोली देखि राम महतारी ॥
तात सुनहु सिय अति सुकुमारी । सास ससुर परिजनहि पिआरी ॥ ४ ॥

The mother-in-law blessed Her in gentle accents and felt distressed when she regarded Her most delicate frame. With Her head bent low Sītā, who was beauty personified and cherished unalloyed love towards Her Lord, sat reflecting, "The lord of my life would depart to the forest; it has yet to be seen who will have the good fortune to accompany Him—my body and soul together or my soul alone. What God intends to do cannot be foreseen even partly." As She scratched the ground with the lovely nails of Her toes, Her anklets produced a musical sound, as if—so declare the poets—they lovingly prayed that Sītā's feet may never abandon them. Seeing Her shed tears from Her charming eyes, Śrī Rāma's mother broke the silence: "Listen, my dear child: Sītā is exceedingly delicate and the pet of her father-in-law and mothers-in-law and the whole family

(1—4)

दो०—पिता जनक भूपाल मनि ससुर भानुकुल भानु ।
पति रबिकुल कैरव बिपिन बिधु गुन रूप निधानु ॥ ५८ ॥

"She has for her father Janaka, the jewel among princes, while her father-in-law is no other than the sun of the solar race (your father); as for her lord (yourself), he is a veritable moon for the lily-like progeny of the sun-god and a repository of goodness and beauty.

(58)

चौ०—मैं पुनि पुत्रबधू प्रिय पाई । रूप रासि गुन सील सुहाई ॥
नयन पुतरि करि प्रीति बढ़ाई । राखेउँ प्रान जानकिहिं लाई ॥ १ ॥
कलपबेलि जिमि बहुबिधि लाली । सींचि सनेह सलिल प्रतिपाली ॥
फूलत फलत भयउ बिधि बामा । जानि न जाइ काह परिनामा ॥ २ ॥
पलँग पीठ तजि गोद हिंडोरा । सियँ न दीन्ह पगु अवनि कठोरा ॥
जिअनमूरि जिमि जोगवत रहऊँ । दीप बाति नहिं टारन कहऊँ ॥ ३ ॥
सोइ सिय चलन चहति बन साथा । आयसु काह होइ रघुनाथा ॥
चंद किरन रस रसिक चकोरी । रबि रुख नयन सकइ किमि जोरी ॥ ४ ॥

"Again I have found in her a beloved daughter-in-law, who is amiable and accomplished, and beauty personified. I have treated her as the very apple of my eye and loved her ever more; nay, my very life is centred in Jānakī. I have fostered her in many ways as a celestial creeper and nourished her by feeding her with the water of affection. Just when the creeper was about to blossom and bear fruit God turned against me and there is no knowing what will be the consequence. Borne invariably on a bedstead, seat, swing or my own lap Sītā has never set her foot on hard ground. I have been tending her like a life-giving herb and never ask her even to stir the wick of a lamp. The same Sītā would accompany you to the woods, and awaits your

orders, O Lord of the Raghus! How can a female Chakora bird, who loves to feed on the nectar borne on the rays of the moon, bear to fix her gaze on the sun?

(1—4)

दो०—करि केहरि निसिचर चरहिं दुष्ट जंतु बन भूरि ।
बिष बाटिकाँ कि सोह सुत सुभग सजीवनि मूरि ॥ ५९ ॥

"Hosts of wild elephants, lions, demons and other fell creatures roam about in the woods. Can a beautiful life-giving herb fit in with a poison-wood, my boy?

(59)

चौ०—बन हित कोल किरात किसोरी । रचीं बिरंचि बिषय सुख भोरी ॥
पाहन कृमि जिमि कठिन सुभाऊ । तिन्हहि कलेसु न कानन काऊ ॥ १ ॥
कै तापस तिय कानन जोगू । जिन्ह तप हेतु तजा सब भोगू ।
सिय बन बसिहि तात केहि भाँती । चित्रलिखित कपि देखि डेराती ॥ २ ॥
सुरसर सुभग बनज बन चारी । डाबर जोगु कि हंसकुमारी ॥
अस बिचारि जस आयसु होई । मैं सिख देउँ जानकिहि सोई ॥ ३ ॥
जौं सिय भवन रहै कह अंबा । मोहि कहँ होइ बहुत अवलंबा ॥
सुनि रघुबीर मातु प्रिय बानी । सील सनेह सुधाँ जनु सानी ॥ ४ ॥

"For residing in the forest God has created Kola* and Kirāta* girls, who are foreign to sensuous pleasures. Adamantine by nature like the insect living on stone, they never experience any hardship in the woods. Another class fit for the forest is the hermit woman, who has renounced all pleasures for the sake of penance. But how, my son, will Sītā live in the forest;—she who is frightened to see even the picture of a monkey? Is a female cygnet, who disports in the lovely lotus-beds of the Mānasa lake, fit for a muddy puddle? First ponder this; then as you order I will instruct Janaka's daughter. "If she stays at home," the mother continued, "that will mean a great solace to me." When Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's race) heard this endearing speech of His mother, imbued as it were with the nectar of grace and affection,—

(1—4)

दो०—कहि प्रिय बचन बिबेकमय कीन्हि मातु परितोष ।
लगे प्रबोधन जानकिहि प्रगटि बिपिन गुन दोष ॥ ६० ॥

He comforted her by addressing tender and wise words to her; and then He started admonishing Jānakī by disclosing to Her the advantages and disadvantages of forest life.

(60)

[PAUSE 14 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—मातु समीप कहत सकुचाहीं । बोले समउ समुझि मन माहीं ॥
राजकुमारि सिखावनु सुनहू । आन भाँति जियँ जनि कछु गुनहू ॥ १ ॥
आपन मोर नीक जौं चहहू । बचनु हमार मानि गृह रहहू ॥
आयसु मोर सासु सेवकाई । सब बिधि भामिनि भवन भलाई ॥ २ ॥

* The names of two well-known hilly tribes.

एहि ते अधिक धरमु नहिं दूजा । सादर सासु ससुर पद पूजा ॥
जब जब मातु करिहि सुधि मोरी । होइहि प्रेम बिकल मति भोरी ॥ ३ ॥
तब तब तुम्ह कहि कथा पुरानी । सुंदरि समुझाएहु मृदु बानी ॥
कहउँ सुभायँ सपथ सत मोही । सुमुखि मातु हित राखउँ तोही ॥ ४ ॥

Even though He hesitated in speaking to Her in the presence of His mother, He realized within Himself the emergency of the situation and said, "Listen to my advice, O princess, and do not misunderstand me. If you wish well of me as well as of yourself, please accept my suggestion and stay at home. You will be obeying my order and rendering service to your mother-in-law: by remaining at home, O good lady, you will be benefited in every way. For a woman there is no other duty more sacred than reverently adoring the feet of her husband's parents. Whenever my mother thinks of me and feeling disconsolate due to her love for me loses her balance of mind, do you console her, my love, with soothing words by narrating old legends to her. I tell you sincerely and solemnly: it is for my mother's sake, O charming lady, that I leave you here. (1–4)

दो०—गुर श्रुति संमत धरम फलु पाइअ बिनहिं कलेस ।
हठ बस सब संकट सहे गालव नहुष नरेस ॥ ६१ ॥

"(By staying at home in deference to my wishes) you will easily obtain the reward of virtue approved of by one's elders and the Vedas; whereas by giving themselves over to obduracy the sage Gālava* King Nahuṣa † and all others suffered great hardships. (61)

चौ०—मैं पुनि करि प्रवान पितु बानी । बेगि फिरब सुनु सुमुखि सयानी ॥
दिवस जात नहिं लागिहि बारा । सुंदरि सिखवनु सुनहु हमारा ॥ १ ॥

---

* Gālava was a pupil of the celebrated sage Viśwāmitra. When he was about to leave his Guru after completing his studies, he requested the latter to ask something by way of the preceptor's fee (Gurudakṣiṇā). Viśwāmitra would ask nothing; but Gālava persisted in importuning him. At last, in order to get rid of his obstinate student, the sage Viśwāmitra ordered him to get for him a thousand snow-white horses with dark ears. Gālava had to experience a good deal of trouble in procuring this rare breed of horses.

† King Nahuṣa was a pious and illustrious ruler. When Indra, the lord of paradise, slew the demon Vṛtra (who was a Brahman by birth) he incurred the sin of having killed a Brahman and out of shame hid himself in the Mānasarovara lake. Finding themselves without a king the gods installed King Nahuṣa on the throne of Indra and proclaimed him as their ruler. Nahuṣa once beheld Indra's wife and, enamoured of her beauty, longed to take her to wife. Sachī, who was noted for her fidelity to her husband, did not approve of Nahuṣa's overtures and approached the sage Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) for protection. The gods and sages thereupon expostulated with Nahuṣa and tried to dissuade him but in vain. According to Bṛhaspati's advice Śachī then offered to accept Nahuṣa as her husband if the latter rode to her on a palanquin carried by sages. Nahuṣa, who was blinded by passion and was bent on having her as his wife at all costs, gladly agreed and prevailed on the sages to carry him on their shoulders. As the sages, who got tired very soon, were proceeding rather slowly, Nahuṣa spurred them on and while doing so kicked the sage Agastya, and the latter pronounced a curse upon him that he should take the form of a python.

जौं हठ करहु प्रेम बस बामा । तौ तुम्ह दुखु पाउब परिनामा ॥
काननु कठिन भयंकरु भारी । घोर घामु हिम बारि बयारी ॥ २ ॥
कुस कंटक मग काँकर नाना । चलब पयादेहिं बिनु पदत्राना ॥
चरन कमल मृदु मंजु तुम्हारे । मारग अगम भूमिधर भारे ॥ ३ ॥
कंदर खोह नदीं नद नारे । अगम अगाध न जाहिं निहारे ॥
भालु बाघ बृक केहरि नागा । करहिं नाद सुनि धीरजु भागा ॥ ४ ॥

"As for myself listen, O fair and sensible lady: I will soon return after redeeming my father's word. Days will steal away quickly; therefore, heed my advice, O charming lady. If, on the other hand, you persist in your obstinacy due to your affection for me, O pretty girl, you will eventually come to grief. The forest is rugged and most dreadful with its terrible heat, cold, rain and blasts. The tracks are beset with prickly grass and thorns and stones of various kinds and you will have to tread them without any protection for the feet. Your lotus-like feet are delicate and lovely, while the paths are most difficult and intercepted by huge mountains, caves and chasms, streams, rivers and rivulets that are unapproachable, unfathomable and terrible to look at. Bears and tigers, wolves, lions and elephants raise such a cry as staggers one's presence of mind. (1—4)

दो०—भूमि सयन बलकल बसन असनु कंद फल मूल ।
ते कि सदा सब दिन मिलहिं सबुइ समय अनुकूल ॥ ६२ ॥

"The ground will be your couch and the bark of trees, your raiment; while bulbs, fruits and roots will be your food. And do you think even these latter will be available to you all the year round? You will get everything according to its season. (62)

चौ०—नर अहार रजनीचर चरहीं । कपट बेष बिधि कोटिक करहीं ॥
लागइ अति पहार कर पानी । बिपिन बिपति नहिं जाइ बखानी ॥ १ ॥
ब्याल कराल बिहग बन घोरा । निसिचर निकर नारि नर चोरा ॥
डरपहिं धीर गहन सुधि आएँ । मृगलोचनि तुम्ह भीरु सुभाएँ ॥ २ ॥
हंसगवनि तुम्ह नहिं बन जोगू । सुनि अपजसु मोहि देइहि लोगू ॥
मानस सलिल सुधाँ प्रतिपाली । जिअइ कि लवन पयोधि मराली ॥ ३ ॥
नव रसाल बन बिहरनसीला । सोह कि कोकिल बिपिन करीला ॥
रहहु भवन अस हृदयँ बिचारी । चंदबदनि दुखु कानन भारी ॥ ४ ॥

"Man-eating demons roam about in the woods and assume all sorts of deceptive forms. The water of the hills is exceedingly unwholesome; the hardships of the forest are beyond all description. There are terrible serpents and fierce wild birds and multitudes of demons who steal both man and woman. The boldest shudder at the very thought of the forest; while you, O fawn-eyed lady, are timid by nature. You are not fit for the woods, O fair lady; the world will revile me when they hear that I am taking you to the forest. Can a female cygnet who has been brought up in the nectarean water of

the Mānasa lake live in the salt water of the ocean? Can a cuckoo that has made merry in a young mango grove have its appropriate place in a thicket of Karīla bushes? Pondering this in your heart stay at home, O moon-faced lady; the hardships of the forest are great. (1—4)

दो०—सहज सुहृद गुर स्वामि सिख जो न करइ सिर मानि ।
सो पछिताइ अघाइ उर अवसि होइ हित हानि ॥ ६३ ॥

"He who does not reverently follow the advice of a disinterested friend, preceptor and master has to repent fully at heart and surely harms himself." (63)

चौ०—सुनि मृदु बचन मनोहर पिय के । लोचन ललित भरे जल सिय के ॥
सीतल सिख दाहक भइ कैसें । चकइहि सरद चंद निसि जैसें ॥ १ ॥
उतरु न आव बिकल बैदेही । तजन चहत सुचि स्वामि सनेही ॥
बरबस रोकि बिलोचन बारी । धरि धीरजु उर अवनिकुमारी ॥ २ ॥
लागि सासु पग कह कर जोरी । छमबि देबि बड़ि अबिनय मोरी ॥
दीन्हि प्रानपति मोहि सिख सोई । जेहि बिधि मोर परम हित होई ॥ ३ ॥
मैं पुनि समुझि दीखि मन माहीं । पिय बियोग सम दुखु जग नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

When Sītā heard these soft and winning words of Her beloved lord, Her lovely eyes filled with tears. His soothing advice proved as scorching to Her as a moon-lit autumnal night to a female Chakravāka bird. Videha's Daughter could make no answer. She was filled with agony to think that Her pious and loving lord would leave Her behind. Perforce restraining Her tears Earth's Daughter took courage and throwing Herself at Her mother in-law's feet spoke to her with Her two palms joined together, "Forgive, O venerable lady, my great impudence. The lord of my life has tendered me only such advice as is conducive to my best interests. I have, however, pondered within myself and realized that there is no calamity in this world as great as being torn away from one's beloved lord. (1—4)

दो०—प्राननाथ करुनायतन सुंदर सुखद सुजान ।
तुम्ह बिनु रघुकुल कुमुद बिधु सुरपुर नरक समान ॥ ६४ ॥

"O lord of my life, O abode of mercy, handsome, genial and wise, O moon for the lily-like race of Raghu, without you heaven would be as obnoxious as hell. (64)

चौ०—मातु पिता भगिनी प्रिय भाई । प्रिय परिवारु सुहृद समुदाई ॥
सासु ससुर गुर सजन सहाई । सुत सुंदर सुसील सुखदाई ॥ १ ॥
जहँ लगि नाथ नेह अरु नाते । पिय बिनु तियहि तरनिहु ते ताते ॥
तनु धनु धामु धरनि पुर राजू । पति बिहीन सबु सोक समाजू ॥ २ ॥
भोग रोगसम भूषन भारू । जम जातना सरिस संसारू ॥
प्राननाथ तुम्ह बिनु जग माहीं । मो कहुँ सुखद कतहुँ कछु नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥

जिय बिनु देह नदी बिनु बारी। तैसिअ नाथ पुरुष बिनु नारी॥
नाथ सकल सुख साथ तुम्हारें। सरद बिमल बिधु बदनु निहारें॥ ४॥

"Father and mother sisters and dear brothers, beloved kinsmen and friends, father-in-law and mother-in-law, preceptor and relatives, allies and even sons, however good-looking, well-behaved and congenial,—nay, whatever ties of affection and kinship there exist—to a woman bereft of her beloved lord they are far more tormenting than the scorching sun. Life, riches, house, land, city and kingdom—all these are mere accoutrements of woe to a woman bereft of her lord. Luxury to her is loathsome like a disease and ornaments a burden while the world is like the torments of hell. Without you, O lord of my life nothing in this world is delightful to me. As the body without a soul and a river without water, even so my lord is a woman without her husband. In your company, my lord, I shall be happy in every way so long as I behold your countenance resembling the cloud less moon of an autumnal night. (1—4)

दो०—खग मृग परिजन नगरु बनु बलकल बिमल दुकूल।
नाथ साथ सुरसदन सम परनसाल सुख मूल॥ ६५॥

"Birds and beasts will be my kindred; the forest, my city and the bark of trees, my spotless robes. And a hut of leaves in the company of my lord will be as comfortable as the abode of gods. (65)

चौ०—बनदेवीं बनदेव उदारा। करिहहिं सासु ससुर सम सारा॥
कुस किसलय साथरी सुहाई। प्रभु सँग मंजु मनोज तुराई॥ १॥
कंद मूल फल अमिअ अहारू। अवध सौध सत सरिस पहारू॥
छिनु छिनु प्रभु पद कमल बिलोकी। रहिहउँ मुदित दिवस जिमि कोकी॥ २॥
बन दुख नाथ कहे बहुतेरे। भय बिषाद परिताप घनेरे॥
प्रभु बियोग लवलेस समाना। सब मिलि होहिं न कृपानिधाना॥ ३॥
अस जियँ जानि सुजान सिरोमनि। लेइअ संग मोहि छाड़िअ जनि॥
बिनती बहुत करौं का स्वामी। करुनामय उर अंतरजामी॥ ४॥

The generous-hearted sylvan gods and goddesses will take care of me like my own father-in-law and mother-in-law. A charming litter of grass and tender leaves will in the company of my lord vie with Cupid's own lovely cushion. Bulbs, roots and fruits will be my ambrosial food; while mountains will be as good as a hundred royal mansions of Ayodhyā. Gazing on the lotus feet of my lord every moment I shall remain as cheerful as a female Chakravāka bird during the daytime. You have mentioned a number of hardships and perils, woes and afflictions attendant with forest life; but all these put together will hardly compare with an iota of the pangs of separation from my lord, O fountain of mercy! Bearing this in mind, O crest-jewel of wise men, take me with you; pray do not leave me behind. I refrain from making a lengthy submission, my lord, knowing as I do that you are all-merciful and have access to the hearts of all. (1-4)

दो०—राखिअ अवध जो अवधि लगि रहत न जनिअहिं प्रान ।
दीनबंधु सुंदर सुखद सील सनेह निधान ॥ ६६ ॥

"If you leave me in Ayodhyā till the expiry of your exile, you may rest assured that I shall not survive, O friend of the afflicted, O handsome and congenial lord, O storehouse of amiability and affection ! (66)

चौ०—मोहि मग चलत न होइहि हारी । छिनु छिनु चरन सरोज निहारी ॥
सबहि भाँति पिय सेवा करिहौं । मारग जनित सकल श्रम हरिहौं ॥ १ ॥
पाय पखारि बैठि तरु छाहीं । करिहउँ बाउ मुदित मन माहीं ॥
श्रम कन सहित स्याम तनु देखें । कहँ दुख समउ प्रानपति पेखें ॥ २ ॥
सम महि तृन तरुपल्लव डासी । पाय पलोटिहि सब निसि दासी ॥
बार बार मृदु मूरति जोही । लागिहि तात बयारि न मोही ॥ ३ ॥
को प्रभु सँग मोहि चितवनिहारा । सिंघबधुहि जिमि ससक सिआरा ॥
मैं सुकुमारि नाथ बन जोगू । तुम्हहि उचित तप मो कहुँ भोगू ॥ ४ ॥

"As I walk along the road I shall know no fatigue gazing on your lotus feet all the while. I shall render all sorts of service to my beloved lord (yourself) and shall relieve him of all the toil occasioned by the journey. Laving your feet and resting in the shade of a tree I shall fan you with a cheerful heart. Beholding your swarthy form bedewed with sweat and casting a look on the lord of my life I can have no occasion for grief. Spreading grass and leaves of trees on an even patch of ground this handmaid of yours will knead your feet overnight. Even as I gaze on your tender form again and again hot winds will have no effect on me. Who can dare look at me, when I am by the side of my lord, any more than a hare or jackal would regard a lioness? How true it is that I am delicate of body while my lord is fit to bear the hardships of a forest life, that it behoves you to undergo penance while it is worth while for me to loll in luxuries ! (1—4)

दो०—ऐसेउ बचन कठोर सुनि जौं न हृदउ बिलगान ।
तौ प्रभु बिषम बियोग दुख सहिहहिं पावँर प्रान ॥ ६७ ॥

"When my heart refuses to be rent even on hearing such cruel words, I am sure my wretched self shall live to bear the terrible pangs of separation from my lord !" (67)

चौ०—अस कहि सीय बिकल भइ भारी । बचन बियोगु न सकी सँभारी ॥
देखि दसा रघुपति जियँ जाना । हठि राखें नहिं राखिहि प्राना ॥ १ ॥
कहेउ कृपाल भानुकुलनाथा । परिहरि सोचु चलहु बन साथा ॥
नहिं बिषाद कर अवसरु आजू । बेगि करहु बन गवन समाजू ॥ २ ॥
कहि प्रिय बचन प्रिया समुझाई । लगे मातु पद आसिष पाई ॥
बेगि प्रजा दुख मेटब आई । जननी निठुर बिसरि जनि जाई ॥ ३ ॥
फिरिहि दसा बिधि बहुरि कि मोरी । देखिहउँ नयन मनोहर जोरी ॥
सुदिन सुघरी तात कब होइहि । जननी जिअत बदन बिधु जोइहि ॥ ४ ॥

So saying Sītā was overwhelmed with distress; She could not bear Her lord's separation even in words. Seeing Her condition the Lord of Raghus was convinced in His heart of hearts that if left behind against Her will She would not survive. The all-merciful Lord of the solar race, therefore, said: "Give up lamentation and accompany me to the forest. Grief is out of season today. Prepare yourself for the journey to the woods at once." Consoling His beloved Consort with these endearing words the Lord threw Himself at His mother's feet and received her blessings. "Pray return soon and relieve the peoples' distress and see that your heartless mother is not forgotten. Shall the tide of my fortune ever turn, O goodness, that I may behold the charming pair with my own eyes again? When, my dear son, will arrive the auspicious day and blessed hour that your mother shall live to see your moon-like countenance?

(1—4)

दो०—बहुरि बच्छ कहि लालु कहि रघुपति रघुबर तात ।
कबहिं बोलाइ लगाइ हियँ हरषि निरखिहउँ गात ॥ ६८ ॥

"When again shall I call you 'my darling', 'my pet child', 'O Lord of Raghus', 'O Chief of Raghu's race', 'my boy', and summoning you clasp you to my bosom and gaze upon your limbs with delight?" (68)

चौ०—लखि सनेह कातरि महतारी । बचनु न आव बिकल भइ भारी ॥
राम प्रबोधु कीन्ह बिधि नाना । समउ सनेहु न जाइ बखाना ॥ १ ॥
तब जानकी सासु पग लागी । सुनिअ माय मैं परम अभागी ॥
सेवा समय दैअँ बनु दीन्हा । मोर मनोरथु सफल न कीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
तजब छोभु जनि छाड़िअ छोहू । करमु कठिन कछु दोसु न मोहू ॥
सुनि सिय बचन सासु अकुलानी । दसा कवनि बिधि कहौं बखानी ॥ ३ ॥
बारहिं बार लाइ उर लीन्ही । धरि धीरजु सिख आसिष दीन्ही ॥
अचल होउ अहिवातु तुम्हारा । जब लगि गंग जमुन जल धारा ॥ ४ ॥

Seeing that His mother was too overwhelmed with emotion to speak any more and was greatly agitated, Srī Rāma consoled her in various ways; the gravity of the occasion and the intensity of affection was more than one could describe. Janaka's Daughter then threw Herself at Her mother-in-law's feet and said, "I tell you, mother: I am most unlucky in that at a time when I should have served you heaven has exiled me to the forest and has refused to grant my desire. Pray be not perturbed any more but at the same time cease not to entertain kindly feelings towards me. Relentless is fate and there is no fault of mine either." The mother-in-law was so distressed to hear Sītā's words that I have no words to describe her condition. Again and again she pressed her Daughter-in-law to her breast and recovering herself admonished and blessed Her: "May the blessed state of your wifehood (the longevity of your husband) know no break and endure so long as the streams of the Gangā and Yamunā continue to flow." (1—4)

दो०--सीतहि सासु असीस सिख दीन्हि अनेक प्रकार।
चली नाइ पद पदुम सिरु अति हित बारहिं बार ॥ ६९ ॥

The mother-in-law blessed and admonished Sītā in various ways and the latter parted from her, most affectionately bowing Her head at her lotus feet again and again. (69)

चौ०—समाचार जब लछिमन पाए। ब्याकुल बिलख बदन उठि धाए ॥
कंप पुलक तन नयन सनीरा। गहे चरन अति प्रेम अधीरा ॥ १ ॥
कहि न सकत कछु चितवत ठाढ़े। मीनु दीन जनु जल तें काढ़े ॥
सोचु हृदयँ बिधि का होनिहारा। सबु सुखु सुकृतु सिरान हमारा ॥ २ ॥
मो कहुँ काह कहब रघुनाथा। रखिहहिं भवन कि लेहहिं साथा ॥
राम बिलोकि बंधु कर जोरें। देह गेह सब सन तृनु तोरें ॥ ३ ॥
बोले बचनु राम नय नागर। सील सनेह सरल सुख सागर ॥
तात प्रेम बस जनि कदराहू। समुझि हृदयँ परिनाम उछाहू ॥ ४ ॥

When Lakṣmaṇa got the news he started up in confusion and ran with a doleful face. Trembling all over with his hair standing on end and eyes full of tears he clasped Śrī Rāma's feet much excited with emotion. He was unable to speak and stood gazing piteously like a fish taken out of water. There was anxiety in his heart. "What is going to happen, O good heavens?" he said to himself. "All my joy and merits are over now. What will the Lord of Raghus command me to do? Will he leave me at home or take me with him?" When Śrī Rāma saw His brother with joined palms having renounced his home and reckless about his own body, He addressed him in the following words, well-versed as He was in the rules of correct behaviour and an ocean of amiability, love, artlessness and joy: "Pray do not lose your balance of mind out of affection, dear brother, and be convinced in your heart of hearts that the end will be a happy one. (1—4)

दो०--मातु पिता गुरु स्वामि सिख सिर धरि करहिं सुभायँ।
लहेउ लाभु तिन्ह जनम कर नतरु जनमु जग जायँ ॥ ७० ॥

"Those who reverently and unconstrainedly follow the advice of their father and mother, preceptor and master have reaped the fruit of their birth or else their coming into this world has been in vain. (70)

चौ०—अस जियँ जानि सुनहु सिख भाई। करहु मातु पितु पद सेवकाई ॥
भवन भरतु रिपुसूदनु नाहीं। राउ बृद्ध मम दुखु मन माहीं ॥ १ ॥
मैं बन जाउँ तुम्हहि लेइ साथा। होइ सबहि बिधि अवध अनाथा ॥
गुरु पितु मातु प्रजा परिवारू। सब कहुँ परइ दुसह दुख भारू ॥ २ ॥
रहहु करहु सब कर परितोषू। नतरु तात होइहि बड़ दोषू ॥
जासु राज प्रिय प्रजा दुखारी। सो नृपु अवसि नरक अधिकारी ॥ ३ ॥

रहहु तात असि नीति बिचारी। सुनत लखनु भए ब्याकुल भारी॥
सिअरें बचन सूखि गए कैसें। परसत तुहिन तामरसु जैसें॥ ४॥

"Bearing this in mind, brother, listen to my advice and wait upon the feet of our father and mothers. Bharata and Ripusūdana (Śatrughna) are not at home, while the king is aged and full of grief for my sake. If I proceed to the woods taking you with me, Ayodhyā will be rendered completely masterless and the preceptor and parents, the people as well as the family, all will be subjected to a spell of terrible suffering. Stay, then, to comfort all; otherwise, brother, we shall incur great sin. A king whose reign brings suffering to his beloved people surely deserves an abode in hell. Bearing in mind this maxim, dear brother, stay at home." Hearing this, Lakṣmaṇa felt much distressed. He turned pale at these soothing words in the same way as a lotus is blasted when touched by frost. (1—4)

दो०—उतरु न आवत प्रेम बस गहे चरन अकुलाइ।
नाथ दासु मैं स्वामि तुम्ह तजहु त काह बसाइ॥ ७१॥

Overwhelmed with emotion he could not answer, but clasped his Brother's feet in anguish. "My lord, I am your slave and you my master; if you abandon me, what help! (71)

चौ०—दीन्हि मोहि सिख नीकि गोसाईं। लागि अगम अपनी कदराईं॥
नरवर धीर धरम धुर धारी। निगम नीति कहुँ ते अधिकारी॥ १॥
मैं सिसु प्रभु सनेहँ प्रतिपाला। मंदरु मेरु कि लेहिं मराला॥
गुर पितु मातु न जानउँ काहू। कहउँ सुभाउ नाथ पतिआहू॥ २॥
जहँ लगि जगत सनेह सगाई। प्रीति प्रतीति निगम निजु गाई॥
मोरें सबइ एक तुम्ह स्वामी। दीनबंधु उर अंतरजामी॥ ३॥
धरम नीति उपदेसिअ ताही। कीरति भूति सुगति प्रिय जाही॥
मन क्रम बचन चरन रत होई। कृपासिंधु परिहरिअ कि सोई॥ ४॥

"My lord, you have given me a sound advice; but due to my faint-heartedness it sounds impracticable to me. Only those noble men who are self-possessed and champion the cause of virtue are fit to be taught the gospel of the Vedas and moral philosophy. I am a mere child fostered by your loving care; can a cygnet lift Mount Mandara or Meru? I know no preceptor nor father nor mother: I tell you sincerely; believe me, my lord. Whatever ties of affection, love and confidence exist in the world as declared by the Vedas—for me they are all centred in you and you alone, my lord. O friend of the afflicted, O knower of the innermost heart of all! Piety and propriety should be taught to him who is fond of glory, fortune and a noble destiny. He, however, who is devoted to your feet in thought, word and deed,—should he be abandoned, O ocean of grace?" (1—4)

दो०—करुनासिंधु सुबंधु के सुनि मृदु बचन बिनीत।
समुझाए उर लाइ प्रभु जानि सनेहँ सभीत॥ ७२॥

Hearing these soft and polite words of His noble brother, the all-compassionate Lord clasped him to His bosom and consoled him, perceiving that he had lost his nerve through love. (72)

चौ०—मागहु बिदा मातु सन जाई । आवहु बेगि चलहु बन भाई ॥
मुदित भए सुनि रघुबर बानी । भयउ लाभ बड़ गइ बड़ि हानी ॥ १ ॥
हरषित हृदयँ मातु पहिं आए । मनहुँ अंध फिरि लोचन पाए ॥
जाइ जननि पग नायउ माथा । मनु रघुनंदन जानकि साथा ॥ २ ॥
पूँछे मातु मलिन मन देखी । लखन कही सब कथा बिसेषी ॥
गई सहमि सुनि बचन कठोरा । मृगी देखि दव जनु चहु ओरा ॥ ३ ॥
लखन लखेउ भा अनरथ आजू । एहिं सनेह बस करब अकाजू ॥
मागत बिदा सभय सकुचाहीं । जाइ संग बिधि कहिहि कि नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"Go and ask leave of your mother; then quickly return and accompany me to the woods." Laksmana rejoiced to hear these words from the Chief of Raghus; great was his gain and a mighty loss was averted. He went up to his mother delighted at heart as a blind man who had regained his lost vision. Approaching her he bowed his head at her feet, while his heart was with Śrī Rāma (the Delighter of Raghu's race) and Janaka's Daughter. Finding him depressed in spirit the mother inquired the reason. when Laksmana related at length the whole incident. Sumitrā was alarmed to hear this cruel report as a doe on finding wild fire all about her. Laksmana apprehended that things would take a wrong turn that day and that his mother would frustrate his plans due to her affection. He, therefore, felt nervous and hesitated in asking leave of her; for he thought within himself, "Good God, will she allow me to accompany Srī Rāma or not?" (1—4)

दो०—समुझि सुमित्राँ राम सिय रूपु सुसीलु सुभाउ ।
नृप सनेहु लखि धुनेउ सिरु पापिनि दीन्ह कुदाउ ॥ ७३ ॥

Remembering the beauty, amiability and noble disposition of Srī Rama and Sītā and considering the king's affection for Them, Sumitrā beat her head as she perceived that the wicked queen (Kaikeyī) had played him foul. (73)

चौ०—धीरजु धरेउ कुअवसर जानी । सहज सुहृद बोली मृदु बानी ॥
तात तुम्हारि मातु बैदेही । पिता रामु सब भाँति सनेही ॥ १ ॥
अवध तहाँ जहँ राम निवासू । तहँइँ दिवसु जहँ भानु प्रकासू ॥
जौं पै सीय रामु बन जाहीं । अवध तुम्हार काजु कछु नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
गुर पितु मातु बंधु सुर साईं । सेइअहिं सकल प्रान की नाईं ॥
रामु प्रानप्रिय जीवन जी के । स्वारथ रहित सखा सबही के ॥ ३ ॥
पूजनीय प्रिय परम जहाँ तें । सब मानिअहिं राम के नातें ॥
अस जियँ जानि संग बन जाहू । लेहु तात जग जीवन लाहू ॥ ४ ॥

Perceiving that the time was unpropitious to them she collected herself and, possessing as she did a naturally good heart, spoke in gentle words, "My dear son, Videha's daughter is your mother while Rama, who loves you in every way, is your father. Ayodhya is there where Rama dwells; there alone is the day where there is sunlight. If Sīta and Rama are really proceeding to the woods, you have no business in Ayodhya. One's preceptor, parents, brother, gods and master—all these should be tended as one's own life. Rama, however, is dearer than life, the soul of our soul and the disinterested friend of all. Whosoever are worthy of adoration and most dear to us should be accounted as such only in so far as they are related to Rama. Bearing this in mind, accompany him to the forest and derive, my boy, the benefit of your existence in the world. (1—4)

दो०—भूरि भाग भाजनु भयहु मोहि समेत बलि जाउँ ।
जौं तुम्हरें मन छाड़ि छलु कीन्ह राम पद ठाउँ ॥ ७४ ॥

"It is your great good fortune as well as mine, I solemnly declare, that your mind has sincerely taken up its abode in Rama's feet. (74)

चौ०—पुत्रवती जुबती जग सोई । रघुपति भगतु जासु सुतु होई ॥
नतरु बाँझ भलि बादि बिआनी । राम बिमुख सुत तें हित जानी ॥ १ ॥
तुम्हरेहिं भाग रामु बन जाहीं । दूसर हेतु तात कछु नाहीं ॥
सकल सुकृत कर बड़ फलु एहू । राम सीय पद सहज सनेहू ॥ २ ॥
रागु रोषु इरिषा मदु मोहू । जनि सपनेहुँ इन्ह के बस होहू ॥
सकल प्रकार बिकार बिहाई । मन क्रम बचन करेहु सेवकाई ॥ ३ ॥
तुम्ह कहुँ बन सब भाँति सुपासू । सँग पितु मातु रामु सिय जासू ॥
जेहिं न रामु बन लहहिं कलेसू । सुत सोइ करेहु इहइ उपदेसू ॥ ४ ॥

"That woman alone can be said to have borne a male issue, whose son is a devotee of Rāma (the Lord of Raghus). Otherwise she had better remain issueless; for she who deems herself fortunate in having a son hostile to Rama has yeaned in vain. It is due to your good fortune that Rāma is proceeding to the forest; there is no other ground for his doing so, my boy. The highest reward of all meritorious acts is verily this—to have spontaneous love for the feet of Sīta and Rama. Never give way even in a dream to passion, anger, jealousy, arrogance or infatuation. Giving up all sorts of morbid feelings serve them in thought, word and deed. You will be happy in every way in the forest since you will have with you your father and mother in Rama and Sīta. Take care, my son, that Rama may be put to no trouble in the woods: that is my admonition to you. (1—4)

छं०—उपदेसु यहु जेहिं तात तुम्हरे राम सिय सुख पावहीं ।
पितु मातु प्रिय परिवार पुर सुख सुरति बन बिसरावहीं ॥
तुलसी प्रभुहि सिख देइ आयसु दीन्ह पुनि आसिष दई ।
रति होउ अबिरल अमल सिय रघुबीर पद नित नित नई ॥

"My admonition to you, dear child, is this: it is up to you to see that Rāma and Sītā lead a happy life in the forest through your good offices and forget their father and mother, near and dear ones as well as the amenities of city life." Having thus admonished the Lord of Tulasidasa (Lakṣmaṇa) Sumitrā granted him leave (to accompany Śrī Rāma) and then invoked her blessing on him: "May your devotion to the feet of Sītā and the Hero of Raghu's race be constant and untainted and ever new."

सो०—मातु चरन सिरु नाइ चले तुरत संकित हृदयँ।
बागुर बिषम तोराइ मनहुँ भाग मृगु भाग बस॥ ७५॥

Bowing his head at his mother's feet Lakṣmaṇa left at once with a timid heart (apprehending any further development that might baulk his plans and interfere with his accompanying Śrī Rāma to the forest); it looked as if a deer had luckily succeeded in bursting a strong snare and made good his escape. (75)

चौ०—गए लखनु जहँ जानकिनाथू। भे मन मुदित पाइ प्रिय साथू॥
बंदि राम सिय चरन सुहाए। चले संग नृपमंदिर आए॥ १॥
कहहिं परसपर पुर नर नारी। भलि बनाइ बिधि बात बिगारी॥
तन कृस मन दुखु बदन मलीने। बिकल मनहुँ माखी मधु छीने॥ २॥
कर मीजहिं सिरु धुनि पछिताहीं। जनु बिनु पंख बिहग अकुलाहीं॥
भइ बड़ि भीर भूप दरबारा। बरनि न जाइ बिषादु अपारा॥ ३॥
सचिवँ उठाइ राउ बैठारे। कहि प्रिय बचन रामु पगु धारे॥
सिय समेत दोउ तनय निहारी। ब्याकुल भयउ भूमिपति भारी॥ ४॥

Lakṣmaṇa went straight to where the Lord of Jānakī (Janaka's Daughter) was; he was glad at heart to find himself in the company of his beloved Brother. Bowing to the charming feet of Śrī Rāma and Sītā he accompanied Them to the king's palace. The men and women of the city said to one another, "How strange that God well-nigh fulfilled our hopes and then shattered them!" With emaciated bodies, a sorrowful heart and doleful faces they felt miserable as a bee that has been robbed of its honey. They wrung their hands, beat their heads and lamented like birds that had been clipt of their wings and were restless without them. A huge crowd had collected at the entrance of the royal palace and there was untold grief which knew no bounds. The minister (Sumantra) raised the king and seated him communicating to him the agreeable news that Śrī Rāma had come. When he saw his two sons with Sītā, his distress was profound. (1—4)

दो०—सीय सहित सुत सुभग दोउ देखि देखि अकुलाइ।
बारहिं बार सनेह बस राउ लेइ उर लाइ॥ ७६॥

The king felt much agitated as he gazed on his two sons with Sītā. Overwhelmed with emotion he pressed them to his bosom again and again. (76)

चौ०—सकइ न बोलि बिकल नरनाहू। सोक जनित उर दारुन दाहू॥
नाइ सीसु पद अति अनुरागा। उठि रघुबीर बिदा तब मागा॥ १॥

पितु असीस आयसु मोहि दीजै । हरष समय बिसमउ कत कीजै ॥
तात किएँ प्रिय प्रेम प्रमादू । जसु जग जाइ होइ अपबादू ॥ २ ॥
सुनि सनेह बस उठि नरनाहाँ । बैठारे रघुपति गहि बाहाँ ॥
सुनहु तात तुम्ह कहुँ मुनि कहहीं । रामु चराचर नायक अहहीं ॥ ३ ॥
सुभ अरु असुभ करम अनुहारी । ईसु देइ फलु हृदयँ बिचारी ॥
करइ जो करम पाव फल सोई । निगम नीति असि कह सबु कोई ॥ ४ ॥

The king was too restless to speak; there was terrible agony in his heart due to excess of grief. Most affectionately bowing His head at His father's feet, the Hero of Raghu's race then arose and asked his permission to proceed to the woods: "Father, give me your blessings and commands; why should you be sorrowing at this hour of jubilation ? By swerving from the path of duty due to attachment for a beloved object, dear father, one's reputation is lost and obloquy incurred." Hearing this the king got up in his love and holding Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Raghus) by the arm he made Him sit down and said, "Listen, my boy: of You the sages declare that Rāma is the Lord of the entire creation, both animate and inanimate. God requites our actions according as they are good or bad, weighing them in the scale of His judgment. He alone who does an act reaps its consequences: such is the law of the Vedas and so declare all. (1—4)

दो०—औरु करै अपराधु कोउ और पाव फल भोगु ।
अति बिचित्र भगवंत गति को जग जानै जोगु ॥ ७७ ॥

"But in this case we find that one commits the offence and another reaps the fruit Highly mysterious are the ways of God: no one in this world is competent to know them." (77)

चौ०—रायँ राम राखन हित लागी । बहुत उपाय किए छलु त्यागी ॥
लखी राम रुख रहत न जाने । धरम धुरंधर धीर सयाने ॥ १ ॥
तब नृप सीय लाइ उर लीन्ही । अति हित बहुत भाँति सिख दीन्ही ॥
कहि बन के दुख दुसह सुनाए । सासु ससुर पितु सुख समुझाए ॥ २ ॥
सिय मनु राम चरन अनुरागा । घरु न सुगमु बनु बिषमु न लागा ॥
औरउ सबहिं सीय समुझाई । कहि कहि बिपिन बिपति अधिकाई ॥ ३ ॥
सचिव नारि गुर नारि सयानी । सहित सनेह कहहिं मृदु बानी ॥
तुम्ह कहुँ तौ न दीन्ह बनबासू । करहु जो कहहिं ससुर गुर सासू ॥ ४ ॥

The king sincerely tried every means to detain Śrī Rāma. But he discovered Śrī Rāma's intention and came to know that He was not going to stay, a champion of righteousness, strong-minded and foresighted as He was. The king thereupon clasped Sītā to his bosom and most lovingly admonished Her in many ways. He described the terrible hardships of forest life and explained to Her the comforts She would enjoy if She chose to stay with Her husband's parents or Her own father. Sītā's mind, however,

was attached to Srī Rāma's feet; hence neither home seemed attractive to Her nor the forest repulsive. Everyone else too expostulated with Sītā dwelling on the many miseries of the forest. The minister's (Sumantra's) wife as well as the preceptor's (Vasiṣṭha's) and other prudent ladies fondly urged Her in gentle tones: "Nobody has exiled you to the forest: therefore, do as your husband's parents and preceptor bid you." (1—4)

दो०—सिख सीतलि हित मधुर मृदु सुनि सीतहि न सोहानि ।
सरद चंद चंदिनि लगत जनु चकई अकुलानि ॥ ७८ ॥

This advice, soothing, friendly, agreeable and tender as it was, did not sound pleasing to Sītā's ears. It seemed as if the touch of the rays of the autumnal moon had made a female Chakravāka bird restless. (78)

चौ०—सीय सकुच बस उतरु न देई । सो सुनि तमकि उठी कैकेई ॥
मुनि पट भूषन भाजन आनी । आगें धरि बोली मृदु बानी ॥ १ ॥
नृपहि प्रानप्रिय तुम्ह रघुबीरा । सील सनेह न छाड़िहि भीरा ॥
सुकृतु सुजसु परलोकु नसाऊ । तुम्हहि जान बन कहिहि न काऊ ॥ २ ॥
अस बिचारि सोइ करहु जो भावा । राम जननि सिख सुनि सुखु पावा ॥
भूपहि बचन बानसम लागे । करहिं न प्रान पयान अभागे ॥ ३ ॥
लोग बिकल मुरुछित नरनाहू । काह करिअ कछु सूझ न काहू ॥
रामु तुरत मुनि बेषु बनाई । चले जनक जननिहि सिरु नाई ॥ ४ ॥

Sītā was too modest to give any reply. But Kaikeyī flared up on hearing their talk. She brought hermits' robes, ornaments and vessels and, placing them before Srī Rāma, addressed Him in soft accents, "You are dear as life to the king, O Hero of Raghu's line; he is too soft to shake off his scruple and attachment for you. He would sooner forfeit his virtue, good reputation and his happiness in the other world than ask you to proceed to the woods. Bearing this in mind do as you please." Śrī Rāma rejoiced to hear His stepmother's admonition; but her words pierced the king like shafts. "Will my wretched life never depart," he said to himself. The people felt much distressed while the king fainted; no one knew what to do. Srī Rāma presently dressed Himself as a hermit and bowing His head to His parents departed. (1—4)

दो०—सजि बन साजु समाजु सबु बनिता बंधु समेत ।
बंदि बिप्र गुर चरन प्रभु चले करि सबहि अचेत ॥ ७९ ॥

Having completed all the equipment and preparations for a journey to the woods the Lord with His Spouse and brother bowed to the feet of the Brahmans and the preceptor (Vasiṣṭha) and departed, leaving everyone in bewilderment. (79)

चौ०—निकसि बसिष्ठ द्वार भए ठाढ़े । देखे लोग बिरह दव दाढ़े ॥
कहि प्रिय बचन सकल समुझाए । बिप्र बृंद रघुबीर बोलाए ॥ १ ॥
गुर सन कहि बरषासन दीन्हे । आदर दान बिनय बस कीन्हे ॥
जाचक दान मान संतोषे । मीत पुनीत प्रेम परितोषे ॥ २ ॥

दासीं दास बोलाइ बहोरी । गुरहि सौंपि बोले कर जोरी ॥
सब कै सार सँभार गोसाईं । करबि जनक जननी की नाईं ॥ ३ ॥
बारहिं बार जोरि जुग पानी । कहत रामु सब सन मृदु बानी ॥
सोइ सब भाँति मोर हितकारी । जेहि तें रहै भुआल सुखारी ॥ ४ ॥

Issuing out of the palace the party halted at Vasistha's door and found the people scorched with the fire of impending separation. The Hero of Raghu's race comforted all with soothing words and then summoned hosts of Brahmans. He requested His preceptor to give them subsistence for a year and captivated their hearts through courtesy, gifts and humility. He gratified mendicants with gifts and attentions and sated His friends with pure love. He then called His men-servants and maid-servants and entrusting them to the care of His Guru spoke to him with joined palms, "My lord, pray look after them and tend them as their own father and mother." Again and again, with joined palms, Srī Rāma addressed each one present there in soft accents, "He alone is friendly to me in every way, through whose good offices the king derives solace. (1—4)

दो०—मातु सकल मोरे बिरहँ जेहिं न होहिं दुख दीन ।
सोइ उपाउ तुम्ह करेहु सब पुर जन परम प्रबीन ॥ ८० ॥

"Take care all of you, my most clever citizens, to see that none of my mothers is smitten with the pangs of separation from me." (80)

चौ०—एहि बिधि राम सबहि समुझावा । गुर पद पदुम हरषि सिरु नावा ॥
गनपति गौरि गिरीसु मनाई । चले असीस पाइ रघुराई ॥ १ ॥
राम चलत अति भयउ बिषादू । सुनि न जाइ पुर आरत नादू ॥
कुसगुन लंक अवध अति सोकू । हरष बिषाद बिबस सुरलोकू ॥ २ ॥
गइ मुरुछा तब भूपति जागे । बोलि सुमंत्रु कहन अस लागे ॥
रामु चले बन प्रान न जाहीं । केहि सुख लागि रहत तन माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
एहि तें कवन ब्यथा बलवाना । जो दुखु पाइ तजहिं तनु प्राना ॥
पुनि धरि धीर कहइ नरनाहू । लै रथु संग सखा तुम्ह जाहू ॥ ४ ॥

In this way Śrī Rāma consoled all and cheerfully bowed His head at the lotus feet of His preceptor. Invoking Lord Ganapati, Goddess Gaurī (Pārvatī) and the Lord of Kailāsa and receiving the blessings of His Guru, the Lord of Raghus proceeded further. There was great lamentation as He sallied forth; the piteous wail of the citizens was revolting to the ears. Evil omens appeared in Lankā and Ayodhya was plunged in grief, while the abode of gods was overcome with a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow. When the spell of unconsciousness broke, the king woke and calling Sumantra thus began, "Rāma has left for the woods, but my life refuses to depart. I wonder what joy it seeks after by clinging to this body! What agony more severe than this can I have, that will draw my breath out of my body?" Then, recovering himself, the king said, "Follow him, my friend, with your chariot. (1—4)

दो०—सुठि सुकुमार कुमार दोउ जनकसुता सुकुमारि ।
रथ चढ़ाइ देखराइ बनु फिरेहु गएँ दिन चारि ॥ ८१ ॥

"Too tender-bodied are the two princes and delicate of frame is Janaka's daughter. Pick them up on the chariot, show them round the forest and return after three or four days. (81)

चौ०—जौं नहिं फिरहिं धीर दोउ भाई । सत्यसंध दृढ़ब्रत रघुराई ॥
तौ तुम्ह बिनय करेहु कर जोरी । फेरिअ प्रभु मिथिलेसकिसोरी ॥ १ ॥
जब सिय कानन देखि डेराई । कहेहु मोरि सिख अवसरु पाई ॥
सासु ससुर अस कहेउ सँदेसू । पुत्रि फिरिअ बन बहुत कलेसू ॥ २ ॥
पितुगृह कबहुँ कबहुँ ससुरारी । रहेहु जहाँ रुचि होइ तुम्हारी ॥
एहि बिधि करेहु उपाय कदंबा । फिरइ त होइ प्रान अवलंबा ॥ ३ ॥
नाहिं त मोर मरनु परिनामा । कछु न बसाइ भएँ बिधि बामा ॥
अस कहि मुरुछि परा महि राऊ । रामु लखनु सिय आनि देखाऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"If the two strong-minded brothers refuse to return,—for the Lord of Raghus is true to his word and firm of resolve,—then do you entreat him with joined palms: 'My lord, kindly send back the daughter of Mithilā's king.' When Sītā gets alarmed at the sight of the jungle, avail yourself of that opportunity and tell her my advice in the following words: 'The parents of your husband have sent this message to you: Please return home, my daughter; there is much hardship in the forest. Now with your parents and now in your husband's home—stay wherever you please.' In this way try all possible means; if she comes back, there will be a support to my life. Otherwise all this will end in my death; nothing can avail against an adverse fate." So saying the king dropped unconscious on the ground exclaiming: "Bring Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā and show them to me!" (1–4)

दो०—पाइ रजायसु नाइ सिरु रथु अति बेग बनाइ ।
गयउ जहाँ बाहेर नगर सीय सहित दोउ भाइ ॥ ८२ ॥

Receiving the king's command Sumantra bowed his head to him and having got ready a most swift chariot went to the outskirts of the city, where Sītā and the two princely brothers were. (82)

चौ०—तब सुमंत्र नृप बचन सुनाए । करि बिनती रथ रामु चढ़ाए ॥
चढ़ि रथ सीय सहित दोउ भाई । चले हृदयँ अवधहि सिरु नाई ॥ १ ॥
चलत रामु लखि अवध अनाथा । बिकल लोग सब लागे साथा ॥
कृपासिंधु बहु बिधि समुझावहिं । फिरहिं प्रेम बस पुनि फिरि आवहिं ॥ २ ॥
लागति अवध भयावनि भारी । मानहुँ कालराति अँधिआरी ॥
घोर जंतु सम पुर नर नारी । डरपहिं एकहि एक निहारी ॥ ३ ॥
घर मसान परिजन जनु भूता । सुत हित मीत मनहुँ जमदूता ॥
बागन्ह बिटप बेलि कुम्हिलाहीं । सरित सरोवर देखि न जाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Then Sumantra delivered to them the king's message and with humble submission persuaded Śrī Rāma to ascend the chariot. Having mounted the chariot Sītā and the two brothers set out on their journey mentally bowing their head to Ayodhyā. Finding Ayodhyā masterless with the departure of Śrī Rāma all those who had assembled there followed in their wake with an agitated mind. Śrī Rāma remonstrated in many ways, an ocean of compassion that He was; and the crowd turned homewards. But dragged by the affection they bore for Him they came back and joined the party once more. Ayodhyā presented a most dismal appearance as though it were the dark night of final dissolution of the universe. The men and women of the city looked like ghastly creatures and were frightened to see one another. Their houses appeared like so many crematories, their retainers like ghosts, and their sons, relations and friends like messengers of death. Trees and creepers in the gardens withered, while streams and ponds repelled the eyes. (1–4)

दो०—हय गय कोटिन्ह केलिमृग पुरपसु चातक मोर।
पिक रथांग सुक सारिका सारस हंस चकोर ॥ ८३ ॥

The numberless horses and elephants, animals kept for pleasure, urban cattle, Chātaka birds, peacocks, cuckoos, Chakrawākas, parrots and Mainas, cranes, swans and Chakoras,— (83)

चौ०—राम बियोग बिकल सब ठाढ़े। जहँ तहँ मनहुँ चित्र लिखि काढ़े ॥
नगरु सफल बनु गहबर भारी। खग मृग बिपुल सकल नर नारी ॥ १ ॥
बिधि कैकई किरातिनि कीन्ही। जेहिं दव दुसह दसहुँ दिसि दीन्ही ॥
सहि न सके रघुबर बिरहागी। चले लोग सब ब्याकुल भागी ॥ २ ॥
सबहिं बिचारु कीन्ह मन माहीं। राम लखन सिय बिनु सुखु नाहीं ॥
जहाँ रामु तहँ सबुइ समाजू। बिनु रघुबीर अवध नहिं काजू ॥ ३ ॥
चले साथ अस मंत्रु दृढ़ाई। सुर दुर्लभ सुख सदन बिहाई ॥
राम चरन पंकज प्रिय जिन्हही। बिषय भोग बस करहिं कि तिन्हही ॥ ४ ॥

—All stood restless due to their separation from Śrī Rāma; they looked like so many pictures drawn here and there. The city resembled an extensive and thick forest full of fruits and the many men and women residing therein represented so many birds and beasts. God assigned Kaikeyī the role of a Bhil woman who set the whole forest in a fierce blaze. The people could not bear the fire of separation from the Chief of Raghus and they all ran away in distress. They all came to this conclusion in their mind: "There can be no happiness without Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. The whole community will live where Rāma takes up his abode; without the Hero of Raghu's race we have no business in Ayodhyā." Having thus firmly resolved they followed Him forsaking their happy homes, which were the envy of gods. Can the pleasures of sense overpower those who hold the lotus feet of Śrī Rāma dear to their heart? (1–4)

दो०—बालक बृद्ध बिहाइ गृहँ लगे लोग सब साथ।
तमसा तीर निवासु किय प्रथम दिवस रघुनाथ ॥ ८४ ॥

Leaving the children and aged people in their homes all the citizens accompanied Śrī Rāma. And the Lord of Raghus made His first day's halt on the bank of the Tamasā. (84)

चौ०—रघुपति प्रजा प्रेमबस देखी । सदय हृदयँ दुखु भयउ बिसेषी ॥
करुनामय रघुनाथ गोसाँई । बेगि पाइअहिं पीर पराई ॥ १ ॥
कहि सप्रेम मृदु बचन सुहाए । बहु बिधि राम लोग समुझाए ॥
किए धरम उपदेस घनेरे । लोग प्रेम बस फिरहिं न फेरे ॥ २ ॥
सीलु सनेहु छाड़ि नहिं जाई । असमंजस बस भे रघुराई ॥
लोग सोग श्रम बस गए सोई । कछुक देवमायाँ मति मोई ॥ ३ ॥
जबहिं जाम जुग जामिनि बीती । राम सचिव सन कहेउ सप्रीती ॥
खोज मारि रथु हाँकहु ताता । आन उपायँ बनिहि नहिं बाता ॥ ४ ॥

When the Lord of Raghus saw His people overwhelmed with love, His tender heart was much afflicted. Lord Śrī Rāma, who is all compassion, is readily touched by others' pain. Addressing them in affectionate, soft and agreeable tones, He comforted all in ways more than one. He also gave them varied instructions in their moral duty; but overmastered by love they would not turn back even though urged to return. Śrī Rāma could not afford to take leave of His amiable disposition and loving nature; the Lord of Raghus thus found Himself in a fix. Overpowered by grief and toil the people fell asleep and the deluding potency of gods further helped to benumb their mind. When two watches of the night had passed, Śrī Rāma addressed the minister in endearing terms, "Father, drive the chariot in such a way as to mix up the tracks; by no other means can our object be accomplished." (1–4)

दो०—राम लखन सिय जान चढ़ि संभु चरन सिरु नाइ ।
सचिवँ चलायउ तुरत रथु इत उत खोज दुराइ ॥ ८५ ॥

Bowing their head to the feet of Lord Śambhu (Śiva) Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā mounted the car; and the minister (Sumantra) immediately drove the chariot now in one direction and now in another, thus confusing the tracks. (85)

चौ०—जागे सकल लोग भएँ भोरू । गे रघुनाथ भयउ अति सोरू ॥
रथ कर खोज कतहुँ नहिं पावहिं । राम राम कहि चहु दिसि धावहिं ॥ १ ॥
मनहुँ बारिनिधि बूड़ जहाजू । भयउ बिकल बड़ बनिक समाजू ॥
एकहि एक देहिं उपदेसू । तजे राम हम जानि कलेसू ॥ २ ॥
निंदहिं आपु सराहहिं मीना । धिग जीवनु रघुबीर बिहीना ॥
जौं पै प्रिय बियोगु बिधि कीन्हा । तौ कस मरनु न मागें दीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
एहि बिधि करत प्रलाप कलापा । आए अवध भरे परितापा ॥
बिषम बियोगु न जाइ बखाना । अवधि आस सब राखहिं प्राना ॥ ४ ॥

All the people woke up at daybreak. "The Lord of Raghus has gone!" they loudly exclaimed. Nowhere could they find the tracks of the chariot and

ran about in all directions crying "Rāma, O Rāma !" It seemed as if a bark had foundered in the ocean, as a result of which the party of merchants that had boarded it felt much agitated. Everyone explained to the other how Rāma had forsaken them perceiving their distress. They condemned themselves and praised the fish (that died as soon as they were taken out of water), and said to one another; "A curse on our life without the Hero of Raghu's race ! If God has torn us from our beloved, why did He not vouchsafe death to us on our asking ? Thus wailing in a variety of ways they all returned to Ayodhyā full of remorse. The anguish of parting was terrible beyond words. Everyone survived in the hope of seeing Rāma on the expiry of the term of exile. (1–4)

दो॰—राम दरस हित नेम ब्रत लगे करन नर नारि ।
मनहुँ कोक कोकी कमल दीन बिहीन तमारि ॥ ८६ ॥

Men and women alike started religious observances and fasts for ensuring Śrī Rāma's return. They were as miserable as the male and female Chakrawāka birds and the lotus flower are in the absence of the sun. (86)

चौ॰—सीता सचिव सहित दोउ भाई । सृंगबेरपुर पहुँचे जाई ॥
उतरे राम देवसरि देखी । कीन्ह दंडवत हरषु बिसेषी ॥ १ ॥
लखन सचिवँ सियँ किए प्रनामा । सबहि सहित सुखु पायउ रामा ॥
गंग सकल मुद मंगल मूला । सब सुख करनि हरनि सब सूला ॥ २ ॥
कहि कहि कोटिक कथा प्रसंगा । रामु बिलोकहिं गंग तरंगा ॥
सचिवहि अनुजहि प्रियहि सुनाई । बिबुध नदी महिमा अधिकाई ॥ ३ ॥
मज्जनु कीन्ह पंथ श्रम गयऊ । सुचि जलु पिअत मुदित मन भयऊ ॥
सुमिरत जाहि मिटइ श्रम भारू । तेहि श्रम यह लौकिक ब्यवहारू ॥ ४ ॥

Accompanied by Sītā and the minister the two brothers arrived at Śṛṅgaverapura. Beholding the celestial stream, Gaṅgā, Śrī Rāma alighted from His car and fell prostrate on the ground with great joy. Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and the minister too made obeisance and Śrī Rāma rejoiced in common with them all. A fount of all joys and blessings, the Gaṅgā brings all delight and drives away all sorrow. Narrating numerous anecdotes connected with it, Śrī Rāma gazed on the waves of the Gaṅgā and told the minister, His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and His beloved Consort the transcendent glory of the celestial stream. They took a plunge in the river and the fatigue of the journey was gone; and their hearts rejoiced when they drank of its holy water. That He whose very thought relieves the great toil of transmigration should feel fatigued shows that He imitated the ways of the world. (1–4)

दो॰—सुद्ध सच्चिदानंदमय कंद भानुकुल केतु ।
चरित करत नर अनुहरत संसृति सागर सेतु ॥ ८७ ॥

The Glory of Raghu's race, who is a fountain of pure existence, knowledge and bliss, performed actions similar to those of a human being, and which constitute a bridge to cross the ocean of mundane existence. (87)

चौ०—यह सुधि गुहँ निषाद जब पाई। मुदित लिए प्रिय बंधु बोलाई॥
लिए फल मूल भेंट भरि भारा। मिलन चलेउ हियँ हरषु अपारा॥ १॥
करि दंडवत भेंट धरि आगें। प्रभुहि बिलोकत अति अनुरागें॥
सहज सनेह बिबस रघुराई। पूँछी कुसल निकट बैठाई॥ २॥
नाथ कुसल पद पंकज देखें। भयउँ भागभाजन जन लेखें॥
देव धरनि धनु धामु तुम्हारा। मैं जनु नीचु सहित परिवारा॥ ३॥
कृपा करिअ पुर धारिअ पाऊ। थापिअ जनु सबु लोगु सिहाऊ॥
कहेहु सत्य सबु सखा सुजाना। मोहि दीन्ह पितु आयसु आना॥ ४॥

When Guha, the Niṣāda*, got this news, he gladly called together his near and dear ones and taking by way of presents fruits and roots in baskets slung across their shoulders, he proceeded to meet the Lord with infinite joy in his heart. Prostrating himself on the ground and placing the presents before the Lord he gazed on Him with great affection. The Lord of Raghus, who is won by natural affection, seated him by His side and inquired about his welfare. "The sight of your lotus feet, my lord, is the root of all welfare; I can now count myself as a blessed man. My land, house and fortune are yours, holy sir; my family and myself are your humble servants. Do me the favour of visiting my town and confer dignity on me. Let everyone envy my lot." "Everything you have said is true, my wise friend; but my father has commanded me otherwise. (1—4)

दो०—बरष चारिदस बासु बन मुनि ब्रत बेषु अहारु।
ग्राम बासु नहिं उचित सुनि गुहहि भयउ दुखु भारु॥ ८८॥

"For four years and ten my home shall be in the woods and my mode of life, dress and food shall be that of a hermit. Hence my staying in a village would be hardly advisable." Guha was deeply distressed to hear this. (88)

चौ०—राम लखन सिय रूप निहारी। कहहिं सप्रेम ग्राम नर नारी॥
ते पितु मातु कहहु सखि कैसे। जिन्ह पठए बन बालक ऐसे॥ १॥
एक कहहिं भल भूपति कीन्हा। लोयन लाहु हमहि बिधि दीन्हा॥
तब निषादपति उर अनुमाना। तरु सिंसुपा मनोहर जाना॥ २॥
लै रघुनाथहि ठाउँ देखावा। कहेउ राम सब भाँति सुहावा॥
पुरजन करि जोहारु घर आए। रघुबर संध्या करन सिधाए॥ ३॥
गुहँ सँवारि साँथरी डसाई। कुस किसलयमय मृदुल सुहाई॥
सुचि फल मूल मधुर मृदु जानी। दोना भरि भरि राखेसि पानी॥ ४॥

Beholding the beauty of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, men and women of the village feelingly said, "What sort of parents, O friend, can they be who have sent such children to the forest?" Other people said, "The king

* A low-born tribe in India tracing their descent from a Brahman through a Śūdra woman.

has done well in that God has thereby rewarded our eyes." The Chief of the Niṣādas then pondered within himself and perceived a charming Aśoka tree. He took the Lord of Raghus to the spot and showed it to Him, when Śrī Rāma declared that the place was beautiful in every way. The people of the town then returned home after paying their respects to Him, while the Chief of Raghus retired for performing His evening devotions. In the meantime Guha prepared a soft and beautiful bed of Kuśa grass and tender leaves and spread it on the ground. He also placed besides Him with his own hands cups of leaves full of fruits and roots which he knew to be pure, delicious and soft. (1—4)

दो०—सिय सुमंत्र भ्राता सहित कंद मूल फल खाइ।
सयन कीन्ह रघुबंसमनि पाय पलोटत भाइ ॥ ८९ ॥

Having partaken of the bulbs, roots and fruits along with Sītā, Sumantra and His brother (Lakṣmaṇa), the Jewel of Raghu's race lay down to sleep, while His brother kneaded His feet. (89)

चौ०—उठे लखनु प्रभु सोवत जानी। कहि सचिवहि सोवन मृदु बानी ॥
कछुक दूरि सजि बान सरासन। जागन लगे बैठि बीरासन ॥ १ ॥
गुहँ बोलाइ पाहरू प्रतीती। ठावँ ठावँ राखे अति प्रीती ॥
आपु लखन पहिं बैठेउ जाई। कटि भाथी सर चाप चढ़ाई ॥ २ ॥
सोवत प्रभुहि निहारि निषादू। भयउ प्रेम बस हृदयँ बिषादू ॥
तनु पुलकित जलु लोचन बहई। बचन सप्रेम लखन सन कहई ॥ ३ ॥
भूपति भवन सुभायँ सुहावा। सुरपति सदनु न पटतर पावा ॥
मनिमय रचित चारु चौबारे। जनु रतिपति निज हाथ सँवारे ॥ ४ ॥

When Lakṣmaṇa perceived that his lord had fallen asleep, he rose and asked the minister in soft accents to retire. As for himself he got ready his bow and arrows and sitting at some distance in the posture of a hero he kept watch. Guha called his trusted watchmen and stationed them at different points with great love; while he himself went and took his seat beside Lakṣmaṇa with a quiver fastened to his waist and an arrow fitted to his bow. When the Niṣāda chief saw his lord lying (on a bed of grass and leaves) he felt great sorrow in his heart due to excess of love; the hair on his body bristled, tears flowed from his eyes and he addressed the following affectionate words to Lakṣmaṇa: "The king's palace is naturally charming; even Indra's residence can hardly stand comparison with it. Its beautiful attics are built of precious gems and are so lovely as though the god of love has constructed them with his own hands. (1—4)

दो०—सुचि सुबिचित्र सुभोगमय सुमन सुगंध सुबास।
पलँग मंजु मनिदीप जहँ सब बिधि सकल सुपास ॥ ९० ॥

"Free from impurities, exceedingly marvellous of design, abounding in exquisite luxuries and scented with the fragrance of flowers, they are furnished

with lovely beds and lighted with gems and are full of amenities of every description.

(90)

चौ०—बिबिध बसन उपधान तुराईं । छीर फेन मृदु बिसद सुहाईं ॥
तहँ सिय रामु सयन निसि करहीं । निज छबि रति मनोज मदु हरहीं ॥ १ ॥
ते सिय रामु साथरीं सोए । श्रमित बसन बिनु जाहिं न जोए ॥
मातु पिता परिजन पुरबासी । सखा सुसील दास अरु दासी ॥ २ ॥
जोगवहिं जिन्हहि प्रान की नाईं । महि सोवत तेइ राम गोसाईं ॥
पिता जनक जग बिदित प्रभाऊ । ससुर सुरेस सखा रघुराऊ ॥ ३ ॥
रामचंदु पति सो बैदेही । सोवत महि बिधि बाम न केही ॥
सिय रघुबीर कि कानन जोगू । करम प्रधान सत्य कह लोगू ॥ ४ ॥

"Again they are equipped with coverlets and sheets, pillows and cushions of various kinds—all soft, white and charming as the froth of milk. It is in such attics that Sitā and Rāma used to sleep at night and humbled by their beauty the pride of Rati and her consort, the god of love. Those very Sitā and Rāma are now lying on a pallet, exhausted and uncovered, a sight one cannot bear to see. The same Lord Rāma whom his father and mother, his own family and the people of the city, his good-natured companions, men-servants and maid-servants, all cherished as their own life, sleeps on the ground Nay, Sitā, whose father Janaka is famed throughout the world, whose father-in-law is King Daśaratha, the chief of Raghus and an ally of Indra (the lord of immortals) and whose spouse is Rāmachandra, is lying on the ground! An adverse fate spares none. Do Sitā and the Hero of Raghu's race deserve to be exiled to the woods? They rightly say 'Fate is supreme.'

(1—4)

दो०—कैकयनंदिनि मंदमति कठिन कुटिलपनु कीन्ह ;
जेहिं रघुनंदन जानकिहि सुख अवसर दुखु दीन्ह ॥ ९१ ॥

"The foolish daughter of Kekaya has wrought a cruel mischief in that she has brought trouble on Sitā and the Delighter of Raghu's race at a time of enjoyment.

(91)

चौ० भइ दिनकर कुल बिटप कुठारी । कुमति कीन्ह सब बिस्व दुखारी ॥
भयउ बिषादु निषादहि भारी । राम सीय महि सयन निहारी ॥ १ ॥
बोले लखन मधुर मृदु बानी । ग्यान बिराग भगति रस सानी ॥
काहु न कोउ सुख दुख कर दाता । निज कृत करम भोग सबु भ्राता ॥ २ ॥
जोग बियोग भोग भल मंदा । हित अनहित मध्यम भ्रम फंदा ॥
जनमु मरनु जहँ लगि जग जालू । संपति बिपति करमु अरु कालू ॥ ३ ॥
धरनि धामु धनु पुर परिवारू । सरगु नरकु जहँ लगि ब्यवहारू ॥
देखिअ सुनिअ गुनिअ मन माहीं । मोह मूल परमारथु नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"The wicked woman has played the axe in felling the tree of the solar race and plunged the whole universe in woe." The Niṣāda chief was sore distressed to see Rāma and Sītā sleeping on the ground. Lakṣmaṇa spoke to him sweet and gentle words imbued with the nectar of wisdom, dispassion and devotion: "No one is a source of delight or pain to another; everyone reaps the fruit of one's own actions, brother. Union and separation, pleasurable and painful experiences, friends, foes and neutrals—snares of delusion are these. Even so birth and death, prosperity and adversity, destiny and time and all the illusion of the world; lands, houses, wealth, town and family, heaven and hell, and all the phenomena of the world; nay, whatever is seen, heard or thought of with the mind has its root in ignorance: nothing exists in reality. (1–4)

दो०—सपनें होइ भिखारि नृपु रंकु नाकपति होइ ।
जागें लाभु न हानि कछु तिमि प्रपंच जियँ जोइ ॥ ९२ ॥

"Suppose in a dream a beggar is crowned king or the lord of paradise is reduced to the state of a pauper; on waking, the one does not gain nor does the other lose anything. So must you look upon this world. (92)

चौ०—अस बिचारि नहिं कीजिअ रोसू । काहुहि बादि न देइअ दोसू ॥
मोह निसाँ सबु सोवनिहारा । देखिअ सपन अनेक प्रकारा ॥ १ ॥
एहिं जग जामिनि जागहिं जोगी । परमारथी प्रपंच बियोगी ॥
जानिअ तबहिं जीव जग जागा । जब सब बिषय बिलास बिरागा ॥ २ ॥
होइ बिबेकु मोह भ्रम भागा । तब रघुनाथ चरन अनुरागा ॥
सखा परम परमारथु एहू । मन क्रम बचन राम पद नेहू ॥ ३ ॥
राम ब्रह्म परमारथ रूपा । अबिगत अलख अनादि अनूपा ॥
सकल बिकार रहित गतभेदा । कहि नित नेति निरूपहिं बेदा ॥ ४ ॥

"Reasoning thus be not angry nor blame anyone in vain. Everyone is slumbering in the night of delusion, and while asleep one sees dreams of various kinds. In this night of mundane existence it is Yogīs (mystics) alone who keep awake,—Yogīs who are in quest of the highest truth and remain aloof from the world. A soul should be deemed as having awoke from the night of the world only when he develops an aversion for the enjoyments of the world of sense. It is only when right understanding comes that the error of delusion disappears and then alone one develops love for the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Raghus). O friend, the highest spiritual goal is this: to be devoted to the feet of Śrī Rāma in thought, word and deed. Śrī Rāma is no other than Brahma (God), the supreme Reality, unknown, imperceptible, beginningless, incomparable, free from all change and beyond all diversity. The Vedas ever speak of Him in negative terms (not this). (1–4)

दो०—भगत भूमि भूसुर सुरभि सुर हित लागि कृपाल ।
करत चरित धरि मनुज तनु सुनत मिटहिं जग जाल ॥ ९३ ॥

"For the sake of His devotees, Earth, the Brahmans, cows and gods, the gracious Lord takes the form of a man and performs actions by hearing of which the snares of the world are broken asunder. (93)

[PAUSE 15 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—सखा समुझि अस परिहरि मोहू । सिय रघुबीर चरन रत होहू ॥
कहत राम गुन भा भिनुसारा । जागे जग मंगल सुखदारा ॥ १ ॥
सकल सौच करि राम नहावा । सुचि सुजान बट छीर मगावा ॥
अनुज सहित सिर जटा बनाए । देखि सुमंत्र नयन जल छाए ॥ २ ॥
हृदयँ दाहु अति बदन मलीना । कह कर जोरि बचन अति दीना ॥
नाथ कहेउ अस कोसलनाथा । लै रथु जाहु राम कें साथा ॥ ३ ॥
बनु देखाइ सुरसरि अन्हवाई । आनेहु फेरि बेगि दोउ भाई ॥
लखनु रामु सिय आनेहु फेरी । संसय सकल सँकोच निबेरी ॥ ४ ॥

"Realizing this, O friend, shed all infatuation and be devoted to the feet of Sītā and the Hero of Raghu's race." While Lakṣmaṇa was yet recounting Śrī Rāma's virtues, the day dawned and the Joy and Delighter of the world woke up. After finishing all purificatory acts Śrī Rāma, who was all pure and wise, performed His ablutions and sent for some milk of the banyan tree. He as well as His brother then matted the hair on their heads, a sight which filled the eyes of Sumantra with tears. With great agony in his heart and a doleful face he joined his palms and spoke in most piteous accents, "The king of Kosala, my lord, charged me thus: 'Take the chariot and go with Rāma; let him see the forest and bathe in the Gaṅgā and then speedily bring the two brothers back. Setting at rest all their doubts and scruples do bring Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma and Sītā back to their home.' (1—4)

दो०—नृप अस कहेउ गोसाइँ जस कहइ करौं बलि सोइ ।
करि बिनती पायन्ह परेउ दीन्ह बाल जिमि रोइ ॥ ९४ ॥

"The king has commanded me thus; I shall, however, do as my lord bids me, I assure you." Having supplicated in this way Sumantra fell at the Lord's feet and wept like a child. (94)

चौ०—तात कृपा करि कीजिअ सोई । जातें अवध अनाथ न होई ॥
मंत्रिहि राम उठाइ प्रबोधा । तात धरम मतु तुम्ह सबु सोधा ॥ १ ॥
सिबि दधीच हरिचंद नरेसा । सहे धरम हित कोटि कलेसा ॥
रंतिदेव बलि भूप सुजाना । धरमु धरेउ सहि संकट नाना ॥ २ ॥
धरमु न दूसर सत्य समाना । आगम निगम पुरान बखाना ॥
मैं सोइ धरमु सुलभ करि पावा । तजें तिहूँ पुर अपजसु छावा ॥ ३ ॥
संभावित कहुँ अपजस लाहू । मरन कोटि सम दारुन दाहू ॥
तुम्ह सन तात बहुत का कहऊँ । दिएँ उतरु फिरि पातकु लहऊँ ॥ ४ ॥

"Have compassion, my darling, and take steps to see that Ayodhyā is not left without a master." Śrī Rāma raised the minister and thus admonished him: "Dear father, you have investigated the truths of religion in their entirety.

Śibi, Dadhīchi and King Hariśchandra suffered untold hardships for the sake of virtue. The wise kings Rantideva* and Bali upheld virtue even through many trials. There is no virtue equal to truthfulness: so declare the Āgamas (Tantras), Vedas and Purāṇas. That virtue I have found by an easy road; by abandoning it I shall be reviled in all the three worlds. To a man who is highly esteemed, infamy causes agony as terrible as a million deaths. Father, what more shall I say to you? By urging something in reply I shall incur sin. (1–4)

दो०—पितु पद गहि कहि कोटि नति बिनय करब कर जोरि ।
चिंता कवनिहु बात कै तात करिअ जनि मोरि ॥ ९५ ॥

"Clasping the feet of my father and conveying my repeated obeisances to him pray to him with joined palms: 'Be not troubled in any way on my account, dear father.' (95)

चौ०—तुम्ह पुनि पितु सम अति हित मोरें । बिनती करउँ तात कर जोरें ॥
सब बिधि सोइ करतब्य तुम्हारें । दुख न पाव पितु सोच हमारें ॥ १ ॥
सुनि रघुनाथ सचिव संबादू । भयउ सपरिजन बिकल निषादू ॥
पुनि कछु लखन कही कटु बानी । प्रभु बरजे बड़ अनुचित जानी ॥ २ ॥
सकुचि राम निज सपथ देवाई । लखन सँदेसु कहिअ जनि जाई ॥
कह सुमंत्रु पुनि भूप सँदेसू । सहि न सकिहि सिय बिपिन कलेसू ॥ ३ ॥
जेहि बिधि अवध आव फिरि सीया । सोइ रघुबरहि तुम्हहि करनीया ॥
नतरु निपट अवलंब बिहीना । मैं न जिअब जिमि जल बिनु मीना ॥ ४ ॥

"You too are extremely kind to me as my own father. Hence I pray with joined palms, sire, do everything in your power to see that my father does not feel miserable on account of grief for us." Hearing this conversation between the Lord of Raghus and the minister (Sumantra) the Niṣāda chief and his people felt much distressed. Thereafter Lakṣmaṇa made some

---

* King Rantideva was a most generous-hearted ruler. He gave away his riches every now and then. Having parted with all that he possessed, he and his family had to remain without food and water for full forty-eight days on one occasion. He did nothing to earn his livelihood and depended on whatever he got unasked. Prolonged starvation had reduced him to a skeleton and he was lying in a semi-conscious state with his wife and children, counting his days. On the 49th day he got some rice boiled in milk, another sweet dish and water. He was just going to share it with his family when a stranger, who was a Brahman by caste, appeared before him. The king gladly and devoutly gave away what was served before him to the Brahman, and dividing the rest among themselves was about to partake of his own share when another newcomer, who happened to be a Śūdra, turned up. The king entertained the Śūdra as well out of the stock he had in hand. In the meantime a low-born man came with his dogs and asked food for himself and his dogs. The king gave away the remaining food to these strangers. He had now left with him water barely sufficient to slake the thirst of a single soul. As the king was about to quench his thirst thereby a pariah made his appearance and piteously begged for water. Moved by his entreaties King Rantideva parted even with his water and went without it himself.

poignant remarks; but the Lord stopped him knowing his words to be highly objectionable. Feeling much abashed Śrī Rāma adjured Sumantra by the love he bore Him not to repeat Lakṣmaṇa's words. Sumantra then reproduced the king's message: "Sītā will not be able to endure the hardships of the forest; therefore, both Rāma (the Chief of Raghus) and yourself (Sumantra) should endeavour to see that Sītā returns to Ayodhyā. Otherwise, left entirely without any support, I shall not survive even as a fish without water.

(1—4)

दो०—मइकें ससुरें सकल सुख जबहिं जहाँ मनु मान।
तहँ तब रहिहि सुखेन सिय जब लगि बिपति बिहान ॥ ९६ ॥

"There is every comfort both in her parents' home as well as with the parents of her lord (*i. e.*, ourselves); therefore, Sītā can live at ease wherever she pleases at a particular time till this adversity ends.

(96)

चौ०—बिनती भूप कीन्ह जेहि भाँती। आरति प्रीति न सो कहि जाती ॥
पितु सँदेसु सुनि कृपानिधाना। सियहि दीन्ह सिख कोटि बिधाना ॥ १ ॥
सासु ससुर गुर प्रिय परिवारू। फिरहु त सब कर मिटै खभारू ॥
सुनि पति बचन कहति बैदेही। सुनहु प्रानपति परम सनेही ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु करुनामय परम बिबेकी। तनु तजि रहति छाँह किमि छेंकी ॥
प्रभा जाइ कहँ भानु बिहाई। कहँ चंद्रिका चंदु तजि जाई ॥ ३ ॥
पतिहि प्रेममय बिनय सुनाई। कहति सचिव सन गिरा सुहाई ॥
तुम्ह पितु ससुर सरिस हितकारी। उतरु देउँ फिरि अनुचित भारी ॥ ४ ॥

"The piteousness and affection with which the king's entreaty was attended cannot be expressed in words." On hearing His father's message the All-merciful Lord admonished Sītā in countless ways. "If you return, the affliction of your mother-in-law and father-in-law, your preceptor and all your near and dear ones will cease." In response to Her lord's advice King Videha's Daughter said, "Listen, most loving lord of my life, my all-compassionate and supremely wise master: can a shadow be torn away from its substance? The sunlight can never exist apart from the sun nor can the radiance of the moon leave the moon." Having submitted Her loving entreaty to Her Lord, She spoke these charming words to the minister: "You are as good to me as my own father or father-in-law; it is therefore most undesirable that I should urge something in reply.

(1—4)

दो०—आरति बस सनमुख भइउँ बिलगु न मानब तात।
आरजसुत पद कमल बिनु बादि जहाँ लगि नात ॥ ९७ ॥

"It is due to grief that I am constrained to address you*; do not take offence at it, sire. In the absence of the lotus feet of my lord all other ties of kinship are of little account.

(97)

* It is unmannerly on the part of a Hindu woman to open her lips before the male elders of her husband.

चौ०—पितु बैभव बिलास मैं डीठा । नृप मनि मुकुट मिलित पद पीठा ॥
सुखनिधान अस पितु गृह मोरें । पिय बिहीन मन भाव न भोरें ॥ १ ॥
ससुर चक्कवइ कोसलराऊ । भुवन चारिदस प्रगट प्रभाऊ ॥
आगें होइ जेहि सुरपति लेई । अरध सिंघासन आसनु देई ॥ २ ॥
ससुरु एतादृस अवध निवासू । प्रिय परिवारु मातु सम सासू ॥
बिनु रघुपति पद पदुम परागा । मोहि केउ सपनेहुँ सुखद न लागा ॥ ३ ॥
अगम पंथ बनभूमि पहारा । करि केहरि सर सरित अपारा ॥
कोल किरात कुरंग बिहंगा । मोहि सब सुखद प्रानपति संगा ॥ ४ ॥

"I have witnessed the glory of my father's fortune: his footstool is kissed by the crowns of the greatest monarchs. Bereft of my lord, my parents' home, which is such an abode of bliss, does not attract my mind even in an unguarded moment. My father-in-law is no less a personage than the King of Kosala, the suzerain lord of the entire globe, whose glory is manifest in all the fourteen spheres comprising the universe. Even Indra (the lord of celestials) goes ahead to receive him and seats him beside himself on his own throne. Such is my father-in-law. Ayodhyā is my abode, agreeable is my family and my mothers-in-law love me as my own mother. But without the dust from the lotus feet of my husband (the Lord of Raghus) none affords me pleasure even in a dream. On the other hand, impassable roads, forest regions and hills, elephants and lions, lakes and streams that cannot be crossed, wild tribes such as Kols and Bhils, deer and birds—all these are delightful to me in the company of my beloved lord. (1—4)

दो०—सासु ससुर सन मोरि हुँति बिनय करबि परि पायँ ।
मोर सोचु जनि करिअ कछु मैं बन सुखी सुभायँ ॥ ९८ ॥

"Falling at the feet of my father-in-law and mother-in-law request them on my behalf not to grieve the least for me; for I feel naturally happy in the woods. (98)

चौ०—प्राननाथ प्रिय देवर साथा । बीर धुरीन धरें धनु भाथा ॥
नहिं मग श्रमु भ्रमु दुख मन मोरें । मोहि लगि सोचु करिअ जनि भोरें ॥ १ ॥
सुनि सुमंत्रु सिय सीतलि बानी । भयउ बिकल जनु फनि मनि हानी ॥
नयन सूझ नहिं सुनइ न काना । कहि न सकइ कछु अति अकुलाना ॥ २ ॥
राम प्रबोधु कीन्ह बहु भाँती । तदपि होति नहिं सीतलि छाती ॥
जतन अनेक साथ हित कीन्हे । उचित उतर रघुनंदन दीन्हे ॥ ३ ॥
मेटि जाइ नहिं राम रजाई । कठिन करम गति कछु न बसाई ॥
राम लखन सिय पद सिरु नाई । फिरेउ बनिक जिमि मूर गवाँई ॥ ४ ॥

"I have by my side the lord of my life as well as his younger brother, the foremost of heroes, both carrying a bow and a quiver full of arrows with them. My mind does not feel the toil of the journey, and there is no giddiness or sorrow; therefore, pray grieve not on my account even unwittingly."

On hearing these soothing words from Sītā's lips, Sumantra felt uneasy as a serpent at the loss of its gem. He saw not with his eyes and heard not with his ears; and he was too agitated to speak. Śrī Rāma comforted him in many ways; yet his heart would not be pacified. He made many efforts even to accompany the Lord; but the Delighter of Raghus gave him suitable replies each time. Śrī Rāma's commands could not be violated either. Cruel was the turn Fate had taken; there was no help. Bowing his head at the feet of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, he turned back as a merchant who had lost his capital.

(1—4)

दो०—रथु हाँकेउ हय राम तन हेरि हेरि हिहिनाहिं ।
देखि निषाद बिषादबस धुनहिं सीस पछिताहिं ॥ ९९ ॥

As he drove the chariot the horses turned their eyes towards Śrī Rāma and neighed. Overcome with grief at this sight, the Niṣādas (Guha's men) beat their heads and lamented.

(99)

चौ०—जासु बियोग बिकल पसु ऐसें । प्रजा मातु पितु जिइहहिं कैसें ॥
बरबस राम सुमंत्रु पठाए । सुरसरि तीर आपु तब आए ॥ १ ॥
मागी नाव न केवटु आना । कहइ तुम्हार मरमु मैं जाना ॥
चरन कमल रज कहुँ सबु कहई । मानुष करनि मूरि कछु अहई ॥ २ ॥
छुअत सिला भइ नारि सुहाई । पाहन तें न काठ कठिनाई ॥
तरनिउ मुनि घरिनी होइ जाई । बाट परइ मोरि नाव उड़ाई ॥ ३ ॥
एहिं प्रतिपालउँ सबु परिवारू । नहिं जानउँ कछु अउर कबारू ॥
जौं प्रभु पार अवसि गा चहहू । मोहि पद पदुम पखारन कहहू ॥ ४ ॥

When even beasts felt so miserable on being torn away from Him how could His subjects and His father and mother hope to live without Him? Śrī Rāma dismissed Sumantra against the latter's will and Himself arrived at the bank of the heavenly stream (Gangā) immediately afterwards. He called for a boat, but the ferryman would not bring it. The latter said, "I know your secret; about the dust of your lotus feet every-one says it is some drug possessing the quality of turning things into human beings. By its very touch a rock was transformed into a charming woman* and wood is not harder than stone. If my boat itself gets converted into a hermit's wife (like Ahalyā), I shall be robbed of the very means of my subsistence in that my boat will disappear. It is by means of this boat that I maintain the whole of my family; I know no other trade. If, therefore, my lord, you must cross the river, command me to lave your lotus feet.

(1—4)

* The boatman evidently refers here, in his own rustic yet humorous way, to Ahalyā, who had been transformed into a rock by the curse of her husband Gotama and was restored to her human form by the very touch of Śrī Rāma's feet (*vide Bālakāṇḍa*, Dohā 210 and the Chhandas immediately following it).

छं०—पद कमल धोइ चढ़ाइ नाव न नाथ उतराई चहौं ।
मोहि राम राउरि आन दसरथ सपथ सब साची कहौं ॥
बरु तीर मारहुँ लखनु पै जब लगि न पाय पखारिहौं ।
तब लगि न तुलसीदास नाथ कृपाल पारु उतारिहौं ॥

"I will let you board the boat only when I have bathed your lotus feet; I seek no toll from you. I swear by you, O Rāma, as well as by King Daśaratha, that what I tell you is all true. Let Lakṣmaṇa shoot me with his arrows if he will; but until I have washed your feet I will not, O gracious lord of Tulasīdāsa, ferry you across."

सो०—सुनि केवट के बैन प्रेम लपेटे अटपटे ।
बिहसे करुनाऐन चितइ जानकी लखन तन ॥ १०० ॥

On hearing these words of the ferryman, mysterious though imbued with love, the all-merciful Lord looked at Janaka's Daughter and Lakṣmaṇa and smiled. (100)

चौ०—कृपासिंधु बोले मुसुकाई । सोइ करु जेहिं तव नाव न जाई ॥
बेगि आनु जल पाय पखारू । होत बिलंबु उतारहि पारू ॥ १ ॥
जासु नाम सुमिरत एक बारा । उतरहिं नर भवसिंधु अपारा ॥
सोइ कृपालु केवटहि निहोरा । जेहिं जगु किय तिहु पगहु ते थोरा ॥ २ ॥
पद नख निरखि देवसरि हरषी । सुनि प्रभु बचन मोहँ मति करषी ॥
केवट राम रजायसु पावा । पानि कठवता भरि लेइ आवा ॥ ३ ॥
अति आनंद उमगि अनुरागा । चरन सरोज पखारन लागा ॥
बरषि सुमन सुर सकल सिहाहीं । एहि सम पुन्यपुंज कोउ नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

The all-compassionate Lord smilingly said, "Do that which may prevent the loss of your boat. Bring water at once and lave my feet; we are getting late, take us across." The same gracious Lord, by uttering whose Name only once men cross the boundless ocean of mundane existence, and for whose three strides the universe proved too small*, thus importuned an ordinary boatman. Though bewildered by the Lord's words, the celestial river (Gangā) rejoiced on beholding the nails of His toes. On receiving Śrī Rāma's command the ferryman brought a wood basin full of water. In great joy and with a heart overflowing with love he proceeded to bathe the Lord's lotus feet. Raining flowers on him all the gods envied his lot and said there was none so meritorious as he. (1—4)

* There is an allusion here to the Lord's Descent as a Dwarf and to His subsequently assuming colossal dimensions and measuring the earth and heavens in a couple of strides. The same Lord who had assumed the form of a Dwarf in the Satyayuga now appeared as Śrī Rāma; hence the two are identified by the poet. It is further mentioned in the Purāṇas that Brahmā (the Creator) laved the foot of the Lord when it reached Brahmaloka (the highest heaven) after measuring the heavens

दो०—पद पखारि जलु पान करि आपु सहित परिवार ।
पितर पारु करि प्रभुहि पुनि मुदित गयउ लेइ पार ॥ १०१ ॥

Having laved the Lord's feet and drunk of the water in which they had been immersed along with the other members of his family, he thereby transported the souls of his deceased forbears across the ocean of metempsychosis and then gladly took the Lord across the Gangā. (101)

चौ०—उतरि ठाढ़ भए सुरसरि रेता । सीय रामु गुह लखन समेता ॥
केवट उतरि दंडवत कीन्हा । प्रभुहि सकुच एहि नहिं कछु दीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
पिय हिय की सिय जाननिहारी । मनि मुदरी मन मुदित उतारी ॥
कहेउ कृपाल लेहि उतराई । केवट चरन गहे अकुलाई ॥ २ ॥
नाथ आजु मैं काह न पावा । मिटे दोष दुख दारिद दावा ॥
बहुत काल मैं कीन्हि मजूरी । आजु दीन्ह बिधि बनि भलि भूरी ॥ ३ ॥
अब कछु नाथ न चाहिअ मोरें । दीनदयाल अनुग्रह तोरें ॥
फिरती बार मोहि जो देबा । सो प्रसादु मैं सिर धरि लेबा ॥ ४ ॥

Getting down from the boat Sītā and Rāma stood on the sands of the Gangā along with Guha and Lakṣmaṇa. The ferryman too got down and fell prostrate before the Lord, who felt uncomfortable at the thought that He had given nothing to the ferryman. Sītā, however, who could read the mind of Her beloved lord, took off Her jewelled ring with a cheerful heart. The gracious Lord said, "Take your toll." But the ferryman clasped His feet in great distress. "What have I not already received, my lord ? The fire of my errors, sorrows and indigence has been quenched today. I worked for my livelihood for a long time; it is only today that God has given me an adequate and handsome return. By your grace, my compassionate Lord, I want nothing now. While returning, whatever you bestow on me I shall thankfully accept that boon." (1–4)

दो०—बहुत कीन्ह प्रभु लखन सियँ नहिं कछु केवटु लेइ ।
बिदा कीन्ह करुनायतन भगति बिमल बरु देइ ॥ १०२ ॥

The Lord as well as Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā did their utmost; but the ferryman would accept nothing. The All-merciful Rāma, therefore, dismissed him after bestowing on him the boon of unalloyed devotion. (102)

---

and it was this water which flowed through the heavens and later on reached the earth in the form of the river Gangā. It is also gathered from the Purāṇas that the river, like all other rivers and mountains etc., is presided over by a goddess of the same name and it is this deity who is represented here as mystified by the Lord's behaviour as an ordinary human being depending on a boatman for being taken across the stream. When, however, the boatman bathed the feet of the Lord with the water of the holy river, the goddess took no time in recognizing the source of her waters and rejoiced to discover the Almighty Lord.

चौ०—तब मज्जनु करि रघुकुलनाथा। पूजि पारथिव नायउ माथा॥
सियँ सुरसरिहि कहेउ कर जोरी। मातु मनोरथ पुरउबि मोरी॥ १॥
पति देवर सँग कुसल बहोरी। आइ करौं जेहिं पूजा तोरी॥
सुनि सिय बिनय प्रेम रस सानी। भइ तब बिमल बारि बर बानी॥ २॥
सुनु रघुबीर प्रिया बैदेही। तव प्रभाउ जग बिदित न केही॥
लोकप होहिं बिलोकत तोरें। तोहि सेवहिं सब सिधि कर जोरें॥ ३॥
तुम्ह जो हमहि बड़ि बिनय सुनाई। कृपा कीन्हि मोहि दीन्हि बड़ाई॥
तदपि देबि मैं देबि असीसा। सफल होन हित निज बागीसा॥ ४॥

The Lord of Raghu's race then bathed in the Gangā and after worshipping a newly-made clay image of Śiva bowed His head to the Deity. With joined palms Sītā addressed the celestial river (Gangā), "Mother, pray accomplish my desire, that I may return with my husband and his younger brother and worship you." In response to Sītā's prayer, steeped as it was in the nectar of love, the following happy utterance came from the holy stream: "Listen, O Vaidehī (Videha's Daughter), beloved Consort of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line): who in this world is not aware of Your glory? People become masters of the heaven's quarters the moment You look at them and all supernatural powers wait upon You with joined palms. By addressing an humble prayer to me You have done me a favour and exalted me. Yet, O venerable lady, bless You I must, just in order to fulfil my speech. (1—4)

दो०—प्राननाथ देवर सहित कुसल कोसला आइ।
पूजिहि सब मनकामना सुजसु रहिहि जग छाइ॥ १०३॥

"With Your beloved Lord and His younger brother You shall safely return to Ayodhyā. Every wish of Your heart shall be accomplished and Your bright glory shall spread throughout the world." (103)

चौ०—गंग बचन सुनि मंगल मूला। मुदित सीय सुरसरि अनुकूला॥
तब प्रभु गुहहि कहेउ घर जाहू। सुनत सूख मुखु भा उर दाहू॥ १॥
दीन बचन गुह कह कर जोरी। बिनय सुनहु रघुकुलमनि मोरी॥
नाथ साथ रहि पंथु देखाई। करि दिन चारि चरन सेवकाई॥ २॥
जेहिं बन जाइ रहब रघुराई। परनकुटी मैं करबि सुहाई॥
तब मोहि कहँ जसि देब रजाई। सोइ करिहउँ रघुबीर दोहाई॥ ३॥
सहज सनेह राम लखि तासू। संग लीन्ह गुह हृदयँ हुलासू॥
पुनि गुहँ ग्याति बोलि सब लीन्हे। करि परितोषु बिदा तब कीन्हे॥ ४॥

Sītā rejoiced to hear these benedictory words of goddess Gangā and to find her favourably disposed. Then the Lord said to Guha, "Go home." The moment he heard this his face turned pale and there was great agony in his heart. With joined palms Guha addressed the Lord in pathetic terms: "Hear my prayer, O Jewel of Raghu's race; let me remain with you, my lord, and show you the road; after serving you for a few days I shall prepare a beautiful

hut of leaves for you in whichever forest, O Lord of Raghus, you may go and take up your abode. Thereafter I swear by you, O Chief of Raghus, to do as you bid me." Perceiving his natural love Śrī Rāma took him with Him and Guha felt much joy in his heart. Then Guha summoned all his kinsmen and having gratified them sent them away. (1—4)

दो०—तब गनपति सिव सुमिरि प्रभु नाइ सुरसरिहि माथ।
सखा अनुज सिय सहित बन गवनु कीन्ह रघुनाथ ॥ १०४ ॥

Then the Lord invoked the gods Gaṇeśa and Śiva; and bowing His head to the celestial stream (Gaṅgā) the Lord of Raghus proceeded to the woods with His friend (Guha), His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Sītā. (104)

चौ०—तेहि दिन भयउ बिटप तर बासू। लखन सखाँ सब कीन्ह सुपासू ॥
प्रात प्रातकृत करि रघुराई। तीरथराजु दीख प्रभु जाई ॥ १ ॥
सचिव सत्य श्रद्धा प्रिय नारी। माधव सरिस मीतु हितकारी ॥
चारि पदारथ भरा भँडारू। पुन्य प्रदेस देस अति चारू ॥ २ ॥
छेत्रु अगम गढ़ु गाढ़ सुहावा। सपनेहुँ नहिं प्रतिपच्छिन्ह पावा ॥
सेन सकल तीरथ बर बीरा। कलुष अनीक दलन रनधीरा ॥ ३ ॥
संगमु सिंहासनु सुठि सोहा। छत्रु अखयबटु मुनि मनु मोहा ॥
चवँर जमुन अरु गंग तरंगा। देखि होहिं दुख दारिद भंगा ॥ ४ ॥

That day He halted under a tree; Lakṣmaṇa and His friend (Guha) provided for all His comforts. At dawn the Lord of Raghus performed His morning duties and then the Lord proceeded further and visited Prayāga, the king of holy places. This king has Truth for his minister, Piety for his beloved consort and a beneficent friend like Bindumādhava (the Deity presiding over Prayāga). His treasury is replete with the four prizes of human life, while the sacred region surrounding the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā marks his most beautiful dominion. The holy Prayāga represents his inaccessible, strong and lovely fortress that no enemy has ever dreamt of possessing. All the sacred spots are his chosen and valiant warriors, who are staunch in battle and capable of crushing the host of sins. The confluence of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā constitutes his exquisite throne, while the immortal banyan tree (known by the name of Akṣayavaṭa) represents his royal umbrella, which captivates the heart even of sages. The waves of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā constitute his *chowries*, whose very sight destroys sorrow and want. (1—4)

दो०—सेवहिं सुकृती साधु सुचि पावहिं सब मनकाम।
बंदी बेद पुरान गन कहहिं बिमल गुन ग्राम ॥ १०५ ॥

Virtuous and holy saints wait upon this king and attain all that they desire; while the Vedas and Purāṇas are the rhapsodists who recount his stainless virtues. (105)

चौ०—को कहि सकइ प्रयाग प्रभाऊ । कलुष पुंज कुंजर मृगराऊ ॥
अस तीरथपति देखि सुहावा । सुख सागर रघुबर सुखु पावा ॥ १ ॥
कहि सिय लखनहि सखहि सुनाई । श्रीमुख तीरथराज बड़ाई ॥
करि प्रनामु देखत बन बागा । कहत महातम अति अनुरागा ॥ २ ॥
एहि बिधि आइ बिलोकी बेनी । सुमिरत सकल सुमंगल देनी ॥
मुदित नहाइ कीन्हि सिव सेवा । पूजि जथाबिधि तीरथ देवा ॥ ३ ॥
तब प्रभु भरद्वाज पहिं आए । करत दंडवत मुनि उर लाए ॥
मुनि मन मोद न कछु कहि जाई । ब्रह्मानंद रासि जनु पाई ॥ ४ ॥

Who can describe the glory of Prayāga, a lion as it were for the herd of elephants in the shape of sins? The Chief of Raghu's race, who is an ocean of bliss, was filled with delight to see this glorious king of holy places. With His own gracious lips He told Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and His friend (Guha) the greatness of Prayāga. Making obeisance to this holy place He cast a look round the groves and gardens and expatiated on its glory with the utmost devotion. In this way he arrived at and saw the confluence of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā, the very thought of which bestows all choice blessings. After bathing in the confluence He gladly adored Lord Śiva and worshipped the deities presiding over the holy Prayāga according to the prescribed ritual. The Lord then called on Bharadwāja; and the sage clasped Him to his bosom as He fell prostrate before him. The joy that the sage felt within his heart cannot be described in words; it looked as if he had found the bliss of oneness with Brahma incarnate.

(1—4)

दो०—दीन्हि असीस मुनीस उर अति अनंदु अस जानि ।
लोचन गोचर सुकृत फल मनहुँ किए बिधि आनि ॥ १०६ ॥

The chief of sages, Bharadwāja, invoked his blessing on the Lord. He felt great joy in his heart to perceive that God had as it were set before him in visible form the reward of all his virtues.

(106)

चौ०—कुसल प्रस्न करि आसन दीन्हे । पूजि प्रेम परिपूरन कीन्हे ॥
कंद मूल फल अंकुर नीके । दिए आनि मुनि मनहुँ अमी के ॥ १ ॥
सीय लखन जन सहित सुहाए । अति रुचि राम मूल फल खाए ॥
भए बिगतश्रम रामु सुखारे । भरद्वाज मृदु बचन उचारे ॥ २ ॥
आजु सुफल तपु तीरथ त्यागू । आजु सुफल जप जोग बिरागू ॥
सफल सकल सुभ साधन साजू । राम तुम्हहि अवलोकत आजू ॥ ३ ॥
लाभ अवधि सुख अवधि न दूजी । तुम्हरें दरस आस सब पूजी ॥
अब करि कृपा देहु बर एहू । निज पद सरसिज सहज सनेहू ॥ ४ ॥

After enquiring of their welfare the sage allotted seats to the royal guests and offering homage to them sated them all with his love. He then brought and presented to them bulbs, roots, fruits and sprouts, all sweet as ambrosia. Śrī Rāma, with Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and His devotee (Guha), partook of those

delicious roots and fruits with much relish. Relieved of His toil Śrī Rāma felt much happy and Bharadwāja addressed Him in gentle tones: "Today my penance, pilgrimage and renunciation have been rewarded; today my prayer, meditation and dispassion have borne fruit; nay, all my pious practices have been rewarded by Your very sight, O Rāma. There is no culmination of gain, no culmination of joy other than this. In beholding You all my hopes have been realized. Now be pleased to grant me this one boon, viz., spontaneous attachment to Your lotus feet.

(1—4)

दो०—करम बचन मन छाड़ि छलु जब लगि जनु न तुम्हार ।
तब लगि सुखु सपनेहुँ नहीं किएँ कोटि उपचार ॥ १०७ ॥

"Until a man gets sincerely devoted to You in thought, word and deed, he cannot even dream of happiness in spite of all his devices." (107)

चौ०—सुनि मुनि बचन रामु सकुचाने । भाव भगति आनंद अघाने ॥
तब रघुबर मुनि सुजसु सुहावा । कोटि भाँति कहि सबहि सुनावा ॥ १ ॥
सो बड़ सो सब गुन गन गेहू । जेहि मुनीस तुम्ह आदर देहू ॥
मुनि रघुबीर परसपर नवहीं । बचन अगोचर सुखु अनुभवहीं ॥ २ ॥
यह सुधि पाइ प्रयाग निवासी । बटु तापस मुनि सिद्ध उदासी ॥
भरद्वाज आश्रम सब आए । देखन दसरथ सुअन सुहाए ॥ ३ ॥
राम प्रनाम कीन्ह सब काहू । मुदित भए लहि लोयन लाहू ॥
देहिं असीस परम सुखु पाई । फिरे सराहत सुंदरताई ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma felt abashed to hear the words of the sage, much as He was sated with joy by his love and devotion. The Chief of Raghus then told all in countless ways the fair and bright renown of the sage. "Great indeed is he and he the repository of all virtues, whom, O chief of sages, you are pleased to honour." The sage (Bharadwāja) and the Hero of Raghu's line thus exchanged civilities and experienced ineffable joy. On receiving this news the people of Prayāga, including religious students, ascetics, hermits, accomplished saints and recluses, all flocked to the hermitage of Bharadwāja in order to have a look at the charming sons of King Daśaratha. Śrī Rāma made obeisance to them all, who were delighted to obtain the reward of their eyes. Deriving supreme joy they gave their blessing and returned extolling the beauty of the royal guests.

(1—4)

दो०—राम कीन्ह बिश्राम निसि प्रात प्रयाग नहाइ ।
चले सहित सिय लखन जन मुदित मुनिहि सिरु नाइ ॥ १०८ ॥

Śrī Rāma reposed (in the hermitage) overnight. At daybreak He bathed at Prayāga (in the confluence of the Gangā and Yamunā) and proceeded on His journey with Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and His attendant (Guha), gladly bowing His head to the sage.

(108)

चौ०—राम सप्रेम कहेउ मुनि पाहीं । नाथ कहिअ हम केहि मग जाहीं ॥
मुनि मन बिहसि राम सन कहहीं । सुगम सकल मग तुम्ह कहुँ अहहीं ॥ १ ॥
साथ लागि मुनि सिष्य बोलाए । सुनि मन मुदित पचासक आए ॥
सबन्हि राम पर प्रेम अपारा । सकल कहहिं मगु दीख हमारा ॥ २ ॥
मुनि बटु चारि संग तब दीन्हे । जिन्ह बहु जनम सुकृत सब कीन्हे ॥
करि प्रनामु रिषि आयसु पाई । प्रमुदित हृदयँ चले रघुराई ॥ ३ ॥
ग्राम निकट जब निकसहिं जाई । देखहिं दरसु नारि नर धाई ॥
होहिं सनाथ जनम फलु पाई । फिरहिं दुखित मनु संग पठाई ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma lovingly asked the sage, "Tell me, my lord, by which route we should go." Smiling inwardly the sage replied to Rāma, "All roads are easy to You." The sage then called his pupils in order that they may escort Śrī Rāma; hearing his call some fifty of them came, glad of heart. They all cherished boundless love for Śrī Rāma and each of them said he had seen the road. The sage then sent with the royal party four religious students who had practised all kinds of virtues in a series of previous births. Making obeisance to the sage and receiving his permission the Lord of Raghus proceeded with a cheerful heart. As the party passed by some village men and women of the village ran to have a look at them. They felt gratified in having attained the fruit of their life and returned disconsolate sending their heart after the strangers. (1—4)

दो०—बिदा किए बटु बिनय करि फिरे पाइ मन काम ।
उतरि नहाए जमुन जल जो सरीर सम स्याम ॥ १०९ ॥

With great courtesy Śrī Rāma dismissed the students, who returned having obtained their heart's desire. The Lord then went below and bathed in the stream of the Yamunā, which was dark as His own body. (109)

चौ०—सुनत तीरबासी नर नारी । धाए निज निज काज बिसारी ॥
लखन राम सिय सुंदरताई । देखि करहिं निज भाग्य बड़ाई ॥ १ ॥
अति लालसा बसहिं मन माहीं । नाउँ गाउँ बूझत सकुचाहीं ॥
जे तिन्ह महुँ बयबिरिध सयाने । तिन्ह करि जुगुति रामु पहिचाने ॥ २ ॥
सकल कथा तिन्ह सबहि सुनाई । बनहि चले पितु आयसु पाई ॥
सुनि सबिषाद सकल पछिताहीं । रानी रायँ कीन्ह भल नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
तेहि अवसर एक तापसु आवा । तेजपुंज लघुबयस सुहावा ॥
कबि अलखित गति बेषु बिरागी । मन क्रम बचन राम अनुरागी ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing of their arrival the people inhabiting the river banks ran to see them unmindful of their duties. Beholding the beauty of Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma and Sītā they congratulated themselves on their good luck. Their hearts were seized with intense longing, but they felt shy in enquiring the names and residence of the newcomers. Such of them, however, as were advanced in

years and intelligent were able to recognize Rāma by dint of their wit. They related to them the whole story telling them how Śrī Rāma had proceeded to the woods in obedience to His father's commands. They were all sad to hear this and lamented: "The king and queen have not done well." In the meantime there arrived an ascetic who was an embodiment of spiritual glow, young in years and charming in appearance. His ways were unknown to the poet; he was attired in the garb of a recluse and was devoted to Rāma in thought, word and deed. (1—4)

दो०—सजल नयन तन पुलकि निज इष्टदेउ पहिचानि ।
परेउ दंड जिमि धरनितल दसा न जाइ बखानि ॥ ११० ॥

His eyes were wet with tears and a thrill ran through his body when he came to recognize his beloved Deity (Śrī Rāma). He fell prostrate on the ground and the state of his body and mind could not be described in words. (110)

चौ०—राम सप्रेम पुलकि उर लावा । परम रंक जनु पारसु पावा ॥
मनहुँ प्रेमु परमारथु दोऊ । मिलत धरें तन कह सबु कोऊ ॥ १ ॥
बहुरि लखन पायन्ह सोइ लागा । लीन्ह उठाइ उमगि अनुरागा ॥
पुनि सिय चरन धूरि धरि सीसा । जननि जानि सिसु दीन्हि असीसा ॥ २ ॥
कीन्ह निषाद दंडवत तेही । मिलेउ मुदित लखि राम सनेही ॥
पिअत नयन पुट रूपु पियूषा । मुदित सुअसनु पाइ जिमि भूखा ॥ ३ ॥
ते पितु मातु कहहु सखि कैसे । जिन्ह पठए बन बालक ऐसे ॥
राम लखन सिय रूपु निहारी । होहिं सनेह बिकल नर नारी ॥ ४ ॥

Thrilling all over with emotion, Śrī Rāma pressed him to His bosom, as though a pauper had found a philosopher's stone. Everyone who saw them suggested as though love, on the one hand, and the supreme Reality, on the other, embraced each other in living form. Next he threw himself at the feet of Lakṣmaṇa, who lifted him with a heart overflowing with love. Again he placed on his head the dust of Sītā's feet and the Mother (Sītā) gave him Her blessing, knowing him to be Her own child. The Niṣāda chief in his turn fell prostrate before the hermit, who gladly embraced him recognizing him to be a friend of Śrī Rāma. With the cup of his eyes he drank the nectar of Śrī Rāma's beauty and was delighted as a hungry soul who had secured excellent food*. "Tell me, friend, what are those father and mother like, that have exiled to the woods children such as these?" Beholding the beauty of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, men and women alike were ill at ease on account of love. (1—4)

* This episode of an ascetic has been ignored by some commentators as an interpolation and obviously it is disconnected with the main thread of the narrative and appears to have been inserted afterwards. All the same the lines are found in all old manuscripts. The poet was a saint of uncommon spiritual insight. It is, therefore, difficult to say what was his intention in writing these lines. In any case the episode cannot be dismissed as an interpolation. When the ascetic has been spoken of here as unknown even to the poet, no one can say with any amount of certainty who he was. To our mind he is none else than the monkey-god, Śrī Hanumān, or a mental projection of the poet (Tulasīdās) himself.

दो०—तब रघुबीर अनेक बिधि सखहि सिखावनु दीन्ह ।
राम रजायसु सीस धरि भवन गवनु तेइँ कीन्ह ॥ १११ ॥

The Hero of Raghu's race then admonished His friend (Guha) in ways more than one. And bowing to Śrī Rāma's commands he left for his home. (111)

चौ०—पुनि सियँ राम लखन कर जोरी । जमुनहि कीन्ह प्रनामु बहोरी ॥
चले ससीय मुदित दोउ भाई । रबितनुजा कइ करत बड़ाई ॥ १ ॥
पथिक अनेक मिलहिं मग जाता । कहहिं सप्रेम देखि दोउ भ्राता ॥
राज लखन सब अंग तुम्हारें । देखि सोचु अति हृदय हमारें ॥ २ ॥
मारग चलहु पयादेहि पाएँ । ज्योतिषु झूठ हमारें भाएँ ॥
अगमु पंथु गिरि कानन भारी । तेहि महँ साथ नारि सुकुमारी ॥ ३ ॥
करि केहरि बन जाइ न जोई । हम सँग चलहिं जो आयसु होई ॥
जाब जहाँ लगि तहँ पहुँचाई । फिरब बहोरि तुम्हहि सिरु नाई ॥ ४ ॥

Then, with joined palms, Sītā, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa made renewed obeisance to the Yamunā. Accompanied by Sītā the two brothers gladly proceeded further, extolling the daughter of the sun-god as they went. Many a traveller met them on the way and beholding the two brothers they fondly exclaimed: "Finding all the marks of royalty on your person, we are sore troubled at heart. When you wend your way on foot, the science of astrology (which tells us that men possessing such and such features should always be borne on some vehicle) is misleading to our mind. The road is difficult and lies through big mountains and forests. On top of it you have a delicate girl with you. Infested with elephants and lions the forest is too terrible to look at. We are ready to accompany you if you enjoin us to do so. We will escort you as far as you go and will then return bowing our heads to you." (1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि पूँछहिं प्रेम बस पुलक गात जलु नैन ।
कृपासिंधु फेरहिं तिन्हहि कहि बिनीत मृदु बैन ॥ ११२ ॥

In this way they offered their services, overmastered as they were by love; a thrill ran through their body and tears came to their eyes. The All-merciful Lord, however, dismissed them with polite and gentle words. (112)

चौ०—जे पुर गाँव बसहिं मग माहीं । तिन्हहि नाग सुर नगर सिहाहीं ॥
केहि सुकृतीं केहि घरीं बसाए । धन्य पुन्यमय परम सुहाए ॥ १ ॥
जहँ जहँ राम चरन चलि जाहीं । तिन्ह समान अमरावति नाहीं ॥
पुन्यपुंज मग निकट निवासी । तिन्हहि सराहहिं सुरपुरबासी ॥ २ ॥
जे भरि नयन बिलोकहिं रामहि । सीता लखन सहित घनस्यामहि ॥
जे सर सरित राम अवगाहहिं । तिन्हहि देव सर सरित सराहहिं ॥ ३ ॥
जेहि तरु तर प्रभु बैठहिं जाई । करहिं कलपतरु तासु बड़ाई ॥
परसि राम पद पदुम परागा । मानति भूमि भूरि निज भागा ॥ ४ ॥

The hamlets and villages that lay on the road were the envy of the towns of the Nāgas and gods. The deities presiding over these towns said to one another: "By what blessed soul and at what auspicious hour were these hamlets and villages founded? They are so lucky, meritorious and of such exquisite beauty!" Even Amarāvatī (the city of immortals) stood no comparison with the spots which were trodden by Śrī Rāma's feet. The dwellers on the wayside were all embodiments of virtue; they evoked the praise of the denizens of heaven inasmuch as they feasted their eyes on Śrī Rāma, who was dark as a cloud, as well as on Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. The lakes and streams in which Śrī Rāma bathed were the envy of the lakes and rivers of gods. The tree under which the Lord sat was glorified by the trees of paradise. Nay, kissing the dust of Śrī Rāma's lotus feet Earth deemed herself most lucky. (1—4)

दो०—छाँह करहिं घन बिबुधगन बरषहिं सुमन सिहाहिं ।
देखत गिरि बन बिहग मृग रामु चले मग जाहिं ॥ ११३ ॥

Clouds screened Him from the sun, the gods rained flowers and regarded Him with wistful eyes as Śrī Rāma wended His way looking at the mountains, forests, birds and beasts. (113)

चौ०—सीता लखन सहित रघुराई । गाँव निकट जब निकसहिं जाई ॥
सुनि सब बाल बृद्ध नर नारी । चलहिं तुरत गृहकाजु बिसारी ॥ १ ॥
राम लखन सिय रूप निहारी । पाइ नयनफलु होहिं सुखारी ॥
सजल बिलोचन पुलक सरीरा । सब भए मगन देखि दोउ बीरा ॥ २ ॥
बरनि न जाइ दसा तिन्ह केरी । लहि जनु रंकन्ह सुरमनि ढेरी ॥
एकन्ह एक बोलि सिख देहीं । लोचन लाहु लेहु छन एहीं ॥ ३ ॥
रामहि देखि एक अनुरागे । चितवत चले जाहिं सँग लागे ॥
एक नयन मग छबि उर आनी । होहिं सिथिल तन मन बर बानी ॥ ४ ॥

Whenever Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and the Lord of Raghus happened to pass by some village, all those who heard of His coming—young and old, men and women alike—came out at once, unmindful of their household duties. Beholding the beauty of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā they obtained the reward of their eyes and felt gratified. Their eyes were wet with tears, a thrill ran through their body and they were all enraptured to behold the two brothers. The state of their mind could not be described in words; it seemed as if paupers had stumbled on a pile of heavenly gems. Calling their neighbours they admonished one another: "Obtain the reward of your eyes this very moment." Some were enraptured to see Rāma and went with Him gazing on Him all the time. Others took His image into the heart through the door of their eyes and were utterly overpowered in body, mind and speech. (1—4)

दो०—एक देखि बट छाँह भलि डासि मृदुल तृन पात ।
कहहिं गवाँइअ छिनुकु श्रमु गवनब अबहिं कि प्रात ॥ ११४ ॥

Seeing the cool shade of a banyan tree some spread soft grass and leaves under it and said, "Pray rest awhile and you may then depart either just now or preferably next morning." (114)

चौ०—एक कलस भरि आनहिं पानी । अँचइअ नाथ कहहिं मृदु बानी ॥
सुनि प्रिय बचन प्रीति अति देखी । राम कृपाल सुसील बिसेषी ॥ १ ॥
जानी श्रमित सीय मन माहीं । घरिक बिलंबु कीन्ह बट छाहीं ॥
मुदित नारि नर देखहिं सोभा । रूप अनूप नयन मनु लोभा ॥ २ ॥
एकटक सब सोहहिं चहुँ ओरा । रामचंद्र मुख चंद चकोरा ॥
तरुन तमाल बरन तनु सोहा । देखत कोटि मदन मनु मोहा ॥ ३ ॥
दामिनि बरन लखन सुठि नीके । नख सिख सुभग भावते जी के ॥
मुनिपट कटिन्ह कसें तूनीरा । सोहहिं कर कमलनि धनु तीरा ॥ ४ ॥

Others brought a pitcher full of water and said in soft accents, "My lord, rinse your mouth." Hearing their agreeable words and seeing their extreme love, the tender-hearted and most amiable Śrī Rāma mentally perceived that Sītā was fatigued, and rested awhile in the shade of the banyan tree. Men and women regarded His loveliness with great delight; His peerless beauty captivated their eyes and mind. Standing in a circle with their gaze fixed on the countenance of Śrī Rāmachandra they all shone like a group of Chakora birds encircling the moon. With His graceful form possessing the hue of a young Tamāla tree He fascinated by His looks the mind of a million Cupids. Lakṣmaṇa too, who had fair limbs bright as lightning and charming from head to foot, appeared most lovely and attracted the mind. With the bark of trees wrapped round their loins and a quiver fastened to their waist the two brothers carried a bow and arrow in their lotus hands. (1—4)

दो०—जटा मुकुट सीसनि सुभग उर भुज नयन बिसाल ।
सरद परब बिधु बदन बर लसत स्वेद कन जाल ॥ ११५ ॥

Their matted locks were coiled on their head in the shape of a beautiful crown and they had a broad chest, long arms and big eyes; while their lovely faces, which resembled the autumnal full moon, glistened with beads of sweat. (115)

चौ०—बरनि न जाइ मनोहर जोरी । सोभा बहुत थोरि मति मोरी ॥
राम लखन सिय सुंदरताई । सब चितवहिं चित मन मति लाई ॥ १ ॥
थके नारि नर प्रेम पिआसे । मनहुँ मृगी मृग देखि दिआ से ॥
सीय समीप ग्रामतिय जाहीं । पूँछत अति सनेहँ सकुचाहीं ॥ २ ॥
बार बार सब लागहिं पाएँ । कहहिं बचन मृदु सरल सुभाएँ ॥
राजकुमारि बिनय हम करहीं । तिय सुभायँ कछु पूँछत डरहीं ॥ ३ ॥
स्वामिनि अबिनय छमबि हमारी । बिलगु न मानब जानि गवाँरी ॥
राजकुअँर दोउ सहज सलोने । इन्ह तें लही दुति मरकत सोने ॥ ४ ॥

The pair was charming beyond words; their loveliness was unbounded and my wits are too poor. Everyone gazed on the beauty of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā with their mind, intellect and reason fully absorbed. Thirsting for love the villagers, both men and women, stood motionless even as bucks and does are dazed by light. The village women approached Sītā; in their extreme love they would put questions to Her but hesitated to do so. Again and again they threw themselves at Her feet and addressed to Her soft and guileless words which came straight from their heart: "Princess, we have a request to make to you, but due to our womanly modesty we are afraid to ask you. Forgive our incivility, madam, and be not offended, knowing that we are after all rustic women. Both these princes are naturally graceful in form; it is from them that emerald and gold have borrowed their green and yellow lustre respectively. (1—4)

दो०—स्यामल गौर किसोर बर सुंदर सुषमा ऐन ।
सरद सर्बरीनाथ मुखु सरद सरोरुह नैन ॥ ११६ ॥

"The one dark and the other fair, but both of tender age,—which is so attractive,—handsome and all-beauteous, they have faces resembling the autumnal moon and eyes like the autumnal lotus. (116)

[PAUSE 16 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

[PAUSE 4 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—कोटि मनोज लजावनिहारे । सुमुखि कहहु को आहिं तुम्हारे ॥
सुनि सनेहमय मंजुल बानी । सकुची सिय मन महुँ मुसुकानी ॥ १ ॥
तिन्हहि बिलोकि बिलोकति धरनी । दुहुँ सकोच सकुचति बरबरनी ॥
सकुचि सप्रेम बाल मृग नयनी । बोली मधुर बचन पिकबयनी ॥ २ ॥
सहज सुभाय सुभग तन गोरे । नामु लखनु लघु देवर मोरे ॥
बहुरि बदनु बिधु अंचल ढाँकी । पिय तन चितइ भौंह करि बाँकी ॥ ३ ॥
खंजन मंजु तिरीछे नयननि । निज पति कहेउ तिन्हहि सियँ सयननि ॥
भईं मुदित सब ग्रामबधूटीं । रंकन्ह राय रासि जनु लूटीं ॥ ४ ॥

"Putting to shame by their comeliness millions of Cupids, tell us, O fair lady, how stand they to you?" Hearing their loving and sweet words Sītā felt abashed and smiled within Herself. Looking at them in the first instance She then cast Her eyes towards the earth; the fair-complexioned lady felt a twofold delicacy. With a voice sweet as the notes of a cuckoo the fawn-eyed princess bashfully replied in loving and sweet accents: "The one who is artless in manners and has a fair and graceful form is called Lakṣmaṇa and is my younger brother-in-law." Again veiling Her moon-like face with an end of Her sari She looked at Her beloved lord and then bending Her eyebrows and casting a sidelong glance with Her beautiful eyes that resembled the Khañjana bird (a species of wagtail) in their quick movements, She indicated to them by signs that He was Her husband. All the village women were as delighted as paupers that had been allowed free access to hoards of riches. (1—4)

दो०—अति सप्रेम सिय पायँ परि बहुबिधि देहिं असीस ।
सदा सोहागिनि होहु तुम्ह जब लगि महि अहि सीस ॥ ११७ ॥

Falling at Sītā's feet in their great love they invoked upon Her many a blessing and said, "May you ever enjoy a happy married life so long as the earth rests on the head of the serpent-god (Śeṣa). (117)

चौ०—पारबती सम पतिप्रिय होहू । देबि न हम पर छाड़ब छोहू ॥
पुनि पुनि बिनय करिअ कर जोरी । जौं एहि मारग फिरिअ बहोरी ॥ १ ॥
दरसनु देब जानि निज दासी । लखीं सीयँ सब प्रेम पिआसी ॥
मधुर बचन कहि कहि परितोषीं । जनु कुमुदिनीं कौमुदीं पोषीं ॥ २ ॥
तबहिं लखन रघुबर रुख जानी । पूँछेउ मगु लोगन्हि मृदु बानी ॥
सुनत नारि नर भए दुखारी । पुलकित गात बिलोचन बारी ॥ ३ ॥
मिटा मोदु मन भए मलीने । बिधि निधि दीन्ह लेत जनु छीने ॥
समुझि करम गति धीरजु कीन्हा । सोधि सुगम मगु तिन्ह कहि दीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

"Be as dear to your lord as Pārvatī to Śiva; yet cease not to be kind to us, O good lady. Again and again we pray with joined palms: should you return by this very route, allow us to see you, remembering us as your handmaids." Sītā found them all athirst with love and comforted them with many soothing words even as lilies are refreshed by moonlight. Presently, reading Śrī Rāma's mind, Lakṣmaṇa gently asked the villagers about the road they should take. The moment they heard this the villagers, both men and women, became sad; a thrill ran through their body and tears rushed to their eyes. Their joy disappeared and they felt depressed at heart as though God was snatching back the treasure He had bestowed upon them. Reflecting on the ways of Fate they took courage and fixing upon the easiest road they gave it out to Him. (1—4)

दो०—लखन जानकी सहित तब गवनु कीन्ह रघुनाथ ।
फेरे सब प्रिय बचन कहि लिए लाइ मन साथ ॥ ११८ ॥

Accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa and Janaka's Daughter the Lord of Raghus then proceeded on His way. (As people tried to follow Him) He sent back all with soothing words, though He took their hearts with Him. (118)

चौ०—फिरत नारि नर अति पछिताहीं । दैअहि दोषु देहिं मन माहीं ॥
सहित बिषाद परसपर कहहीं । बिधि करतब उलटे सब अहहीं ॥ १ ॥
निपट निरंकुस निठुर निसंकू । जेहिं ससि कीन्ह सरुज सकलंकू ॥
रूख कलपतरु सागरु खारा । तेहिं पठए बन राजकुमारा ॥ २ ॥
जौं पै इन्हहि दीन्ह बनबासू । कीन्ह बादि बिधि भोग बिलासू ॥
ए बिचरहिं मग बिनु पदत्राना । रचे बादि बिधि बाहन नाना ॥ ३ ॥
ए महि परहिं डासि कुस पाता । सुभग सेज कत सृजत बिधाता ॥
तरुबर बास इन्हहि बिधि दीन्हा । धवल धाम रचि रचि श्रमु कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

While returning to their homes the villagers, men and women alike, grievously lamented and blamed Providence in their heart. In doleful accents they said to one another, "The Creator's doings are all perverse. He is

absolutely uncontrollable, heartless and remorseless. It is He who made the moon sickly (subject to periodical waning) and disfigured it with a dark patch. Again, it is He who made the wish-yielding tree a member of the vegetable kingdom and the ocean salt It is the same Creator who has sent these princes into the woods. If He has chosen the forest as a fit abode for them, in vain has He provided luxuries and enjoyments. If they traverse the road bare-footed, in vain has He created vehicles of various kinds. If they repose on the ground littered with grass and leaves, why does God take the trouble of making lovely beds? If God has assigned them an abode in the shade of umbrageous trees, in vain has He taken pains to erect milk-white palaces.

(1—4)

दो०—जौं ए मुनि पट धर जटिल सुंदर सुठि सुकुमार।
बिबिध भाँति भूषन बसन बादि किए करतार॥ ११९॥

"If these handsome and most delicate boys are attired in the robes of hermits and wear matted locks of hair, in vain has God created ornaments and costumes of various kinds. (119)

चौ०—जौं ए कंद मूल फल खाहीं। बादि सुधादि असन जग माहीं॥
एक कहहिं ए सहज सुहाए। आपु प्रगट भए बिधि न बनाए॥ १॥
जहँ लगि बेद कही बिधि करनी। श्रवन नयन मन गोचर बरनी॥
देखहु खोजि भुअन दस चारी। कहँ अस पुरुष कहाँ असि नारी॥ २॥
इन्हहि देखि बिधि मनु अनुरागा। पटतर जोग बनावै लागा॥
कीन्ह बहुत श्रम ऐक न आए। तेहिं इरिषा बन आनि दुराए॥ ३॥
एक कहहिं हम बहुत न जानहिं। आपुहिं परम धन्य करि मानहिं॥
ते पुनि पुन्यपुंज हम लेखे। जे देखहिं देखिहहिं जिन्ह देखे॥ ४॥

"If they live on bulbs, roots and fruits alone, foods such as ambrosia exist in vain." Some people remarked: "Naturally charming as they are, these princes must have appeared on earth of their own accord and were not made by God. In all the fourteen spheres ransack if you will the entire range of God's creation described at length in the Vedas as perceptible by the ears, eyes and mind; but where can you find such a man and such a woman as these? At their very sight Brahmā's mind got enamoured of them and he proceeded to make their match. He toiled much, but none of his products could even approach the prototype; and due to that jealousy he has brought these princes to the woods and hid them." Others said, "We do not claim to know much, but account ourselves supremely blessed. They too are meritorious in our opinion, who see these princes or have seen them or shall see them." (1--4)

दो०—एहि बिधि कहि कहि बचन प्रिय लेहिं नयन भरि नीर।
किमि चलिहहिं मारग अगम सुठि सुकुमार सरीर॥ १२०॥

Making such fond remarks they filled their eyes with tears and added, "Most delicate of frame, how shall they be able to traverse such an impassable road?"

(120)

चौ०—नारि सनेह बिकल बस होहीं। चकईं साँझ समय जनु सोहीं॥
मृदु पद कमल कठिन मगु जानी। गहबरि हृदयँ कहहिं बर बानी॥ १॥
परसत मृदुल चरन अरुनारे। सकुचति महि जिमि हृदय हमारे॥
जौं जगदीस इन्हहि बनु दीन्हा। कस न सुमनमय मारगु कीन्हा॥ २॥
जौं मागा पाइअ बिधि पाहीं। ए रखिअहिं सखि आँखिन्ह माहीं॥
जे नर नारि न अवसर आए। तिन्ह सिय रामु न देखन पाए॥ ३॥
सुनि सुरूपु बूझहिं अकुलाई। अब लगि गए कहाँ लगि भाई॥
समरथ धाइ बिलोकहिं जाई। प्रमुदित फिरहिं जनमफलु पाई॥ ४॥

Overmastered by love the women felt as uneasy as the female Chakrawāka bird does at evening time. Reflecting on the tender lotus-like feet of the princes and the rough road they were required to tread, the women said in polite phrase with their heart stirred with deep feeling. "At the touch of their soft and rosy soles the earth shrinks even as our hearts. If the Lord of the universe chose to exile them into the woods, why did He not at the same time strew their path with flowers? If we can secure from Heaven the boon of our asking, let us keep these princes, O friend, within the lids of our eyes." Those men and women, who did not come in time, were unable to behold Sītā and Rāma. Hearing of their exquisite beauty they anxiously asked: "How far, brother, must they have gone by now?" The stronger of them ran on and saw the princes, and returned triumphant, attaining the end of their existence. (1—4)

दो०—अबला बालक बृद्ध जन कर मीजहिं पछिताहिं।
होहिं प्रेमबस लोग इमि रामु जहाँ जहँ जाहिं॥ १२१॥

Women, children and the aged, however, wrung their hands and lamented. In this way the people were smitten with love wherever Śrī Rāma went. (121)

चौ०—गावँ गावँ अस होइ अनंदू। देखि भानुकुल कैरव चंदू॥
जे कछु समाचार सुनि पावहिं। ते नृप रानिहि दोसु लगावहिं॥ १॥
कहहिं एक अति भल नरनाहू। दीन्ह हमहि जोइ लोचन लाहू॥
कहहिं परसपर लोग लोगाईं। बातें सरल सनेह सुहाईं॥ २॥
ते पितु मातु धन्य जिन्ह जाए। धन्य सो नगरु जहाँ तें आए॥
धन्य सो देसु सैलु बन गाऊँ। जहँ जहँ जाहिं धन्य सोइ ठाऊँ॥ ३॥
सुखु पायउ बिरंचि रचि तेही। ए जेहि के सब भाँति सनेही॥
राम लखन पथि कथा सुहाई। रही सकल मग कानन छाई॥ ४॥

In every village there was similar rejoicing at the sight of Śrī Rāma, who was a moon to the lily-like solar race. Those who could get some information as to the circumstances that had led to Śrī Rāma's banishment blamed the king and queen. Others said, "The king is too benevolent in that he has vouchsafed to us the reward of our eyes." Men and women talked among themselves in straight, loving and agreeable phrases; "Blessed are the parents

who gave birth to these princes; and happy the town from which they hail. Happy is the land, hill, forest, village and every spot which they visit. Nay, the Creator must have felt happy in creating him who looks upon these princes as his near and dear ones." The delightful story as to how Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa travelled in the woods was broadcast all along the route and throughout the forest. (1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि रघुकुल कमल रबि मग लोगन्ह सुख देत ।
जाहिं चले देखत बिपिन सिय सौमित्रि समेत ॥ १२२ ॥

Thus bringing joy to the people on the roadside, Śrī Rāma, who was a veritable sun to the lotus-like solar race, proceeded with Sītā and Sumitrā's son (Lakṣmaṇa) looking at the forest. (122)

चौ०—आगें रामु लखनु बने पाछें । तापस बेष बिराजत काछें ॥
उभय बीच सिय सोहति कैसें । ब्रह्म जीव बिच माया जैसें ॥ १ ॥
बहुरि कहउँ छबि जसि मन बसई । जनु मधु मदन मध्य रति लसई ॥
उपमा बहुरि कहउँ जियँ जोही । जनु बुध बिधु बिच रोहिनि सोही ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु पद रेख बीच बिच सीता । धरति चरन मग चलति सभीता ॥
सीय राम पद अंक बराएँ । लखन चलहिं मगु दाहिन लाएँ ॥ ३ ॥
राम लखन सिय प्रीति सुहाई । बचन अगोचर किमि कहि जाई ॥
खग मृग मगन देखि छबि होहीं । लिए चोरि चित राम बटोहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma walked in front while Lakṣmaṇa followed in the rear, both conspicuous in the robes of ascetics. Between the two Sītā shone like Māyā (the Divine Energy) that stands between Brahma (God), on the one hand, and the individual soul, on the other. To illustrate Her beauty as it exists in my mind in another way, She looked like Rati (the wife of the god of love) shining between Madhu (the spirit presiding over the vernal season) and the god of love. Beating my brains for another illustration, let me say She shone like Rohiṇī* between Budha† and the moon-god. Sītā trod on the path with meticulous care planting Her feet in the space between Her lord's footprints. Avoiding the footprints both of Sītā and Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa traversed the road always keeping them to his right. The ideal affection of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā was past telling; how can one describe it? Even birds and beasts were enraptured to behold their beauty; their hearts were stolen by Rāma, the wayfarer. (1—4)

दो०—जिन्ह जिन्ह देखे पथिक प्रिय सिय समेत दोउ भाइ ।
भव मगु अगमु अनंदु तेइ बिनु श्रम रहे सिराइ ॥ १२३ ॥

* The deity presiding over the fourth lunar asterism, who was born as the daughter of Dakṣa and was the favourite consort of the moon-god.

† The god presiding over the planet Mercury and descended from the loins of the moon-god.

Whoever saw the beloved travellers, Sītā and the two brothers (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), joyously reached the end of the toilsome journey of life without any exertion. (123)

चौ०—अजहुँ जासु उर सपनेहुँ काऊ । बसहुँ लखनु सिय रामु बटाऊ ॥
राम धाम पथ पाइहि सोई । जो पथ पाव कबहुँ मुनि कोई ॥ १ ॥
तब रघुबीर श्रमित सिय जानी । देखि निकट बटु सीतल पानी ॥
तहँ बसि कंद मूल फल खाई । प्रात नहाइ चले रघुराई ॥ २ ॥
देखत बन सर सैल सुहाए । बालमीकि आश्रम प्रभु आए ॥
राम दीख मुनि बासु सुहावन । सुंदर गिरि काननु जलु पावन ॥ ३ ॥
सरनि सरोज बिटप बन फूले । गुंजत मंजु मधुप रस भूले ॥
खग मृग बिपुल कोलाहल करहीं । बिरहित बैर मुदित मन चरहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Nay, to this very day, anyone in whose heart the wayfarers, Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and Rāma, should ever lodge even in a dream shall find the road leading to Śrī Rāma's abode (the divine region known by the name of Sāketa),—the road that scarce any anchorite may find. Then perceiving that Sītā was tired and seeing a banyan tree and cool water hard by, the Hero of Raghu's line partook of bulbs, roots and fruits and staying there overnight and bathing at dawn the Lord of Raghus proceeded further. And beholding lovely woods, lakes and hills the Lord reached the hermitage of Vālmīki. Śrī Rāma saw the sage's beautiful dwelling with its charming hills and forest and its sacred waters. The lotuses in the ponds and the trees in the woods were in blossom; intoxicated with their honey bees sweetly hummed over them. Birds and beasts made a tumultuous noise and moved about in joy free from all animosities. (1—4)

दो०—सुचि सुंदर आश्रमु निरखि हरषे राजिवनेन ।
सुनि रघुबर आगमनु मुनि आगें आयउ लेन ॥ १२४ ॥

The lotus-eyed Rāma rejoiced to behold the sacred and lovely hermitage; and hearing of the arrival of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line) the sage came forth to receive Him. (124)

चौ०—मुनि कहुँ राम दंडवत कीन्हा । आसिरबादु बिप्रबर दीन्हा ॥
देखि राम छबि नयन जुड़ाने । करि सनमानु आश्रमहिं आने ॥ १ ॥
मुनिबर अतिथि प्रानप्रिय पाए । कंद मूल फल मधुर मगाए ॥
सिय सौमित्रि राम फल खाए । तब मुनि आश्रम दिए सुहाए ॥ २ ॥
बालमीकि मन आनँदु भारी । मंगल मूरति नयन निहारी ॥
तब कर कमल जोरि रघुराई । बोले बचन श्रवन सुखदाई ॥ ३ ॥
तुम्ह त्रिकाल दरसी मुनिनाथा । बिस्व बदर जिमि तुम्हरें हाथा ॥
अस कहि प्रभु सब कथा बखानी । जेहि जेहि भाँति दीन्ह बनु रानी ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma fell prostrate before the sage and the holy Brahman blessed Him in return. The sight of Śrī Rāma's beauty gladdened his eyes and with due honour he took the Lord into the hermitage. Finding a guest as dear to

him as life itself the holy sage sent for delicious bulbs, roots and fruits. Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and Rāma partook of those fruits and the sage then assigned them beautiful quarters. Great was the joy of Vālmīki's heart as he beheld with his own eyes Śrī Rāma, who was bliss personified. Joining His lotus palms the Lord of Raghus then spoke to him in words which were delightful to the ears. "You directly perceive everything relating to the past, present and future, O lord of sages; the whole universe is as if in the palm of your hand." Saying so the Lord related to him the whole story as to how the queen (Kaikeyī) had exiled Him into the woods. (1—4)

दो०—तात बचन पुनि मातु हित भाइ भरत अस राउ ।
मो कहुँ दरस तुम्हार प्रभु सबु मम पुन्य प्रभाउ ॥ १२५ ॥

"Compliance with my father's commands, gratification of my stepmother (Kaikeyī), the installation of a brother like Bharata to the throne and my seeing you—all this, my lord, is the result of my meritorious acts. (125)

चौ०—देखि पाय मुनिराय तुम्हारे । भए सुकृत सब सुफल हमारे ॥
अब जहँ राउर आयसु होई । मुनि उदबेगु न पावै कोई ॥ १ ॥
मुनि तापस जिन्ह तें दुखु लहहीं । ते नरेस बिनु पावक दहहीं ॥
मंगल मूल बिप्र परितोषू । दहइ कोटि कुल भूसुर रोषू ॥ २ ॥
अस जियँ जानि कहिअ सोइ ठाऊँ । सिय सौमित्रि सहित जहँ जाऊँ ॥
तहँ रचि रुचिर परन तृन साला । बासु करौं कछु काल कृपाला ॥ ३ ॥
सहज सरल सुनि रघुबर बानी । साधु साधु बोले मुनि ग्यानी ॥
कस न कहहु अस रघुकुलकेतू । तुम्ह पालक संतत श्रुति सेतू ॥ ४ ॥

"In beholding your feet, O king of sages, all my good deeds have been rewarded. Now I intend to go wherever you command me to go and where no anchorite may feel disturbed. For such monarchs as prove a source of annoyance to hermits and ascetics are consumed without fire. While the satisfaction of Brahmans is the root of happiness, their wrath consumes millions of generations. Bearing this in mind pray tell me a place to which I may proceed with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa (Sumitrā's son), and building a charming hut of leaves and grass may spend some time there, O good sir." Hearing these guileless and unsophisticated words of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line) the enlightened sage exclaimed, "Quite so, right You are. Why should You not speak thus, O Glory of Raghu's line, ever busy as You are in maintaining the laws laid down by the Vedas ? (1—4)

छं०—श्रुति सेतु पालक राम तुम्ह जगदीस माया जानकी ।
जो सृजति जगु पालति हरति रुख पाइ कृपानिधान की ॥
जो सहससीसु अहीसु महिधरु लखनु सचराचर धनी ।
सुर काज धरि नरराज तनु चले दलन खल निसिचर अनी ॥

"While You are the custodian of the Vedic laws and the Lord of the universe, Sītā (Janaka's Daughter) is Your Māyā (Divine Energy) who creates, preserves and dissolves the universe on receiving the tacit approval of Your gracious Self. As for Lakṣmaṇa he is no other than the thousand-headed Śeṣa (the lord of serpents), the supporter of the globe and the lord of the entire creation, both animate and inanimate. Having assumed the form of a king for the sake of the gods You are out to crush the host of wicked demons.

सो०—राम सरूप तुम्हार बचन अगोचर बुद्धिपर ।
अबिगत अकथ अपार नेति नेति नित निगम कह ॥ १२६ ॥

"Your Being, O Rāma, is beyond the range of speech and beyond conception, unknown, unutterable and infinite; the Vedas ever speak of It as 'not that', 'not that'.
(126)

चौ०—जगु पेखन तुम्ह देखनिहारे । बिधि हरि संभु नचावनिहारे ॥
तेउ न जानहिं मरमु तुम्हारा । औरु तुम्हहि को जाननिहारा ॥ १ ॥
सोइ जानइ जेहि देहु जनाई । जानत तुम्हहि तुम्हइ होइ जाई ॥
तुम्हरिहि कृपाँ तुम्हहि रघुनंदन । जानहिं भगत भगत उर चंदन ॥ २ ॥
चिदानंदमय देह तुम्हारी । बिगत बिकार जान अधिकारी ॥
नर तनु धरेहु संत सुर काजा । कहहु करहु जस प्राकृत राजा ॥ ३ ॥
राम देखि सुनि चरित तुम्हारे । जड़ मोहहिं बुध होहिं सुखारे ॥
तुम्ह जो कहहु करहु सबु साँचा । जस काछिअ तस चाहिअ नाचा ॥ ४ ॥

"This world is a spectacle and You are its spectator; nay, You make even Brahmā (the Creator), Viṣṇu (the Preserver) and Śambhu (the Destroyer) dance to Your tune. Even these latter know not Your secret; who else can know You? In fact, he alone can know You, to whom You make Yourself known; and the moment he knows You he becomes one with You. It is by Your grace, O Delighter of Raghus, that Your votaries come to know You, O Comforter of the heart of devotees. Your body is all consciousness and bliss and is devoid of change; it is the competent alone who realize this. It is for the sake of saints and gods that You have assumed a human semblance and speak and act even as worldly monarchs do. The stupid get puzzled while the wise feel delighted when they see or hear of Your doings. All that You say or do is true; for one should play the role one has assumed on the stage.
(1—4)

दो०—पूँछेहु मोहि कि रहौं कहँ मैं पूँछत सकुचाउँ ।
जहँ न होहु तहँ देहु कहि तुम्हहि देखावौं ठाउँ ॥ १२७ ॥

"You ask me: 'Where should I take up my residence?' But I ask You with diffidence: tell me first the place where You are not; then alone I can show You a suitable place."
(127)

चौ०—सुनि मुनि बचन प्रेम रस साने । सकुचि राम मन महुँ मुसुकाने ॥
बालमीकि हँसि कहहिं बहोरी । बानी मधुर अमिअ रस बोरी ॥ १ ॥
सुनहु राम अब कहउँ निकेता । जहाँ बसहु सिय लखन समेता ॥
जिन्ह के श्रवन समुद्र समाना । कथा तुम्हारि सुभग सरि नाना ॥ २ ॥
भरहिं निरंतर होहिं न पूरे । तिन्ह के हिय तुम्ह कहुँ गृह रूरे ॥
लोचन चातक जिन्ह करि राखे । रहहिं दरस जलधर अभिलाषे ॥ ३ ॥
निदरहिं सरित सिंधु सर भारी । रूप बिंदु जल होहिं सुखारी ॥
तिन्ह कें हृदय सदन सुखदायक । बसहु बंधु सिय सह रघुनायक ॥ ४ ॥

On hearing the sage's words, imbued as they were with love, Śrī Rāma felt abashed and smiled within Himself. Vālmīki too smiled and spoke to Him again in words as sweet as though they were steeped in nectar: "Listen, Rāma: I tell You now the places where You should abide with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. The heart of those whose ears are, like the ocean, constantly replenished with a number of lovely streams in the shape of Your stories but know no surfeit, shall be Your charming abode. Again, the heart of those whose eyes long to see You even as the Chātaka bird longs to see the rain-cloud and, disdaining like the same bird rivers, oceans and big lakes, derive satisfaction from a drop of Your rain-like beauty,—it is their heart alone which shall serve as Your delightful home, where You and Your younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Sītā may take up Your abode. (1—4)

दो०—जसु तुम्हार मानस बिमल हंसिनि जीहा जासु ।
मुकताहल गुन गन चुनइ राम बसहु हियँ तासु ॥ १२८ ॥

"Nay, You should dwell in the heart of him whose swan-like tongue picks up pearls in the shape of Your virtues in the holy Manasarovar lake of Your fame. (128)

चौ०—प्रभु प्रसाद सुचि सुभग सुबासा । सादर जासु लहइ नित नासा ॥
तुम्हहि निबेदित भोजन करहीं । प्रभु प्रसाद पट भूषन धरहीं ॥ १ ॥
सीस नवहिं सुर गुरु द्विज देखी । प्रीति सहित करि बिनय बिसेषी ॥
कर नित करहिं राम पद पूजा । राम भरोस हृदयँ नहिं दूजा ॥ २ ॥
चरन राम तीरथ चलि जाहीं । राम बसहु तिन्ह के मन माहीं ॥
मंत्रराजु नित जपहिं तुम्हारा । पूजहिं तुम्हहि सहित परिवारा ॥ ३ ॥
तरपन होम करहिं बिधि नाना । बिप्र जेवाँइ देहिं बहु दाना ॥
तुम्ह तें अधिक गुरहि जियँ जानी । सकल भायँ सेवहिं सनमानी ॥ ४ ॥

"Abide, O Rāma, in the mind of those whose nose devoutly inhales every day the fragrance of sacred and lovely offerings (in the shape of flowers, sandal-paste, etc.) made to their Lord (Yourself), who eat only that which has been offered to You and put on clothes and ornaments first dedicated to You, whose heads bow down most submissively and lovingly at the sight of a god, preceptor or Brahman, whose hands adore Śrī Rāma's feet every day,

who cherish in their heart faith in Rāma and none else, and whose feet take them to holy places sacred to Rāma. Again, those who are ever engaged in muttering the Rāma-Mantra (श्रीरामाय नमः), the king of all sacred formulas, and worship You along with Your associates; who offer water to the manes and pour oblations into the sacred fire in diverse ways, who feed the Brahmans and bestow liberal gifts on them and who look upon their preceptor as greater than Yourself and wait upon him with due honour and entire devotion;— (1—4)

दो०—सबु करि मागहिं एक फलु राम चरन रति होउ ।
तिन्ह कें मन मंदिर बसहु सिय रघुनंदन दोउ ॥ १२९ ॥

"And who having done all this ask only one boon as their reward: "Let me have devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet!"—enthrone Yourself in the temple of their heart, both Sītā and the Delighter of Raghus (Yourself). (129)

चौ०—काम कोह मद मान न मोहा । लोभ न छोभ न राग न द्रोहा ॥
जिन्ह कें कपट दंभ नहिं माया । तिन्ह कें हृदय बसहु रघुराया ॥ १ ॥
सब के प्रिय सब के हितकारी । दुख सुख सरिस प्रसंसा गारी ॥
कहहिं सत्य प्रिय बचन बिचारी । जागत सोवत सरन तुम्हारी ॥ २ ॥
तुम्हहि छाड़ि गति दूसरि नाहीं । राम बसहु तिन्ह के मन माहीं ॥
जननी सम जानहिं परनारी । धनु पराव बिष तें बिष भारी ॥ ३ ॥
जे हरषहिं पर संपति देखी । दुखित होहिं पर बिपति बिसेषी ॥
जिन्हहि राम तुम्ह प्रानपिआरे । तिन्ह के मन सुभ सदन तुम्हारे ॥ ४ ॥

"Those who have no lust, anger, arrogance, pride or infatuation, are without greed, excitement, attraction or aversion and who are free from fraud, hypocrisy and deceit,—it is in their heart that You should abide, O Chief of Raghus. Again, those who are beloved of all and friendly to all, to whom joy and sorrow, applause and abuse are alike and who scrupulously utter truthful and polite words, nay, who are resigned to You whether awake or asleep and who have no support other than Yourself,—it is in their mind, O Rāma, that You should dwell. Again, those who look upon another's wife as their own mother and to whom another's wealth is the deadliest of all poisons, who rejoice to see others' prosperity and are particularly grieved to see another's distress, and to whom, O Rāma, You are dear as their own life,—their minds are Your blessed abodes. (1—4)

दो०—स्वामि सखा पितु मातु गुर जिन्ह के सब तुम्ह तात ।
मन मंदिर तिन्ह कें बसहु सीय सहित दोउ भ्रात ॥ १३० ॥

"Nay, those to whom, my dear, You are at once master and companion, father and mother, preceptor and everything else,—it is in the temple of their mind that Sītā and You two brothers should reside. (130)

चौ०—अवगुन तजि सब के गुन गहहीं । बिप्र धेनु हित संकट सहहीं ॥
नीति निपुन जिन्ह कइ जग लीका । घर तुम्हार तिन्ह कर मनु नीका ॥ १ ॥
गुन तुम्हार समुझइ निज दोसा । जेहि सब भाँति तुम्हार भरोसा ॥
राम भगत प्रिय लागहिं जेही । तेहि उर बसहु सहित बैदेही ॥ २ ॥
जाति पाँति धनु धरमु बड़ाई । प्रिय परिवार सदन सुखदाई ॥
सब तजि तुम्हहि रहइ उर लाई । तेहि के हृदयँ रहहु रघुराई ॥ ३ ॥
सरगु नरकु अपबरगु समाना । जहँ तहँ देख धरें धनु बाना ॥
करम बचन मन राउर चेरा । राम करहु तेहि कें उर डेरा ॥ ४ ॥

"Those who overlook others' faults and pick out their virtues and endure hardships for the sake of the Brahmans and cows, nay, who have established their reputation in the world as well-versed in the laws of propriety,—their mind is Your excellent abode. Again, he who attributes his virtues to You and holds himself responsible for his faults, nay, who entirely depends on You and loves Śrī Rāma's (Your) devotees,—it is in his heart that You should stay along with Videha's Daughter (Sītā). He who, renouncing his caste and kinsmen, wealth, faith and glory, his near and dear ones, his happy home and everything else, cherishes You in his bosom—in his heart You should take up Your residence, O Lord of Raghus. Again, he to whom heaven and hell and even freedom from birth and death are the same inasmuch as he beholds You armed with a bow and arrow here, there and everywhere, and who is Your servant in thought, word and deed,—make his heart, O Rāma, Your permanent abode.

(1—4)

दो०—जाहि न चाहिअ कबहुँ कछु तुम्ह सन सहज सनेहु ।
बसहु निरंतर तासु मन सो राउर निज गेहु ॥ १३१ ॥

"Lastly, he who wants nothing at any moment and bears natural affinity to You,—incessantly dwell in his mind; for that is Your own home."

(131)

चौ०—एहि बिधि मुनिबर भवन देखाए । बचन सप्रेम राम मन भाए ॥
कह मुनि सुनहु भानुकुलनायक । आश्रम कहउँ समय सुखदायक ॥ १ ॥
चित्रकूट गिरि करहु निवासू । तहँ तुम्हार सब भाँति सुपासू ॥
सैलु सुहावन कानन चारू । करि केहरि मृग बिहग बिहारू ॥ २ ॥
नदी पुनीत पुरान बखानी । अत्रिप्रिया निज तपबल आनी ॥
सुरसरि धार नाउँ मंदाकिनि । जो सब पातक पोतक डाकिनि ॥ ३ ॥
अत्रि आदि मुनिबर बहु बसहीं । करहिं जोग जप तप तन कसहीं ॥
चलहु सफल श्रम सब कर करहू । राम देहु गौरव गिरिबरहू ॥ ४ ॥

The eminent sage (Vālmīki) thus showed Him many a dwelling place and his loving words gladdened Śrī Rāma's soul. "Listen, O Lord of the solar race," the sage continued, "I now tell You a retreat that will be delightful in the existing circumstances. Take up Your abode on the Chitrakūṭa hill: there You will have comforts of every kind. Charming is the hill and lovely

the forest, which is the haunt of elephants, lions and deer as well as of birds. It has a holy river glorified in the Purāṇas, which was brought by the sage Atri's wife by dint of her penance. It is a side stream of the Gaṅgā and is known by the name of Mandākinī,—which is quick to destroy sins even as a witch strangles infants. Many great sages like Atri dwell there practising Yoga and muttering sacred formulae and wasting their bodies with penance. Wend Your way thither, Rāma, and reward the labours of all, conferring dignity on this great mountain as well.'' (1-4)

दो०—चित्रकूट महिमा अमित कही महामुनि गाइ।
आइ नहाए सरित बर सिय समेत दोउ भाइ॥ १३२॥

The great sage Vālmīki then described at length the infinite glory of Chitrakūṭa and the two brothers proceeded with Sītā and bathed in the sacred stream. (132)

चौ०—रघुबर कहेउ लखन भल घाटू। करहु कतहुँ अब ठाहर ठाटू॥
लखन दीख पय उतर करारा। चहुँ दिसि फिरेउ धनुष जिमि नारा॥ १॥
नदी पनच सर सम दम दाना। सकल कलुष कलि साउज नाना॥
चित्रकूट जनु अचल अहेरी। चुकइ न घात मार मुठभेरी॥ २॥
अस कहि लखन ठाउँ देखरावा। थलु बिलोकि रघुबर सुखु पावा॥
रमेउ राम मनु देवन्ह जाना। चले सहित सुर थपति प्रधाना॥ ३॥
कोल किरात बेष सब आए। रचे परन तृन सदन सुहाए॥
बरनि न जाहिं मंजु दुइ साला। एक ललित लघु एक बिसाला॥ ४॥

Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line) said, "Lakṣmana, here is a good descent into the river; now make arrangements for our stay somewhere.'' Lakṣmaṇa presently surveyed the north bank of the Payaswinī river and said, "Lo! a rivulet bends round this bank like a bow with the river itself for its string, control of the mind and senses and charity for its arrows, and all the sins of the Kali age for its many quarries. Armed with this bow Mount Chitrakūṭa looks like an immovable huntsman who takes unerring aim and makes a frontal attack.'' With these words Lakṣmana showed the spot and Śrī Rāma was delighted to see the site. When the gods learnt that the site had captivated Śrī Rāma's mind, they proceeded to Chitrakūṭa with Viśwakarmā, the chief of heavenly architects. They all came in the guise of Kols and Bhils and put up beautiful dwellings of leaves and grass. They made a pair of huts which were lovely beyond words, the one a fine little cottage and the other larger in size. (1—4)

दो०—लखन जानकी सहित प्रभु राजत रुचिर निकेत।
सोह मदनु मुनि बेष जनु रति रितुराज समेत॥ १३३॥

Adorning the beautiful cottage with Lakṣmaṇa and Janaka's Daughter (Sītā) the Lord looked as charming as the god of love accompanied by his consort, Rati, and the deity presiding over Spring (the king of seasons) all attired as hermits. (133)

[PAUSE 17 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—अमर नाग किंनर दिसिपाला । चित्रकूट आए तेहि काला ॥
राम प्रनामु कीन्ह सब काहू । मुदित देव लहि लोचन लाहू ॥ १ ॥
बरषि सुमन कह देव समाजू । नाथ सनाथ भए हम आजू ॥
करि बिनती दुख दुसह सुनाए । हरषित निज निज सदन सिधाए ॥ २ ॥
चित्रकूट रघुनंदनु छाए । समाचार सुनि सुनि मुनि आए ॥
आवत देखि मुदित मुनिबृंदा । कीन्ह दंडवत रघुकुल चंदा ॥ ३ ॥
मुनि रघुबरहि लाइ उर लेहीं । सुफल होन हित आसिष देहीं ॥
सिय सौमित्रि राम छबि देखहिं । साधन सकल सफल करि लेखहिं ॥ ४ ॥

Gods, Nāgas, Kinnaras and the guardians of the eight quarters flocked to Chitrakūṭa on that occasion. Srī Rāma made obeisance to them all and the gods were glad to obtain the reward of their eyes. Raining flowers the heavenly host exclaimed, "Lord, we feel secure today!" With great supplication they described their terrible woes, and returned joyfully to their several abodes. Hermits streamed in as they heard the news that Śrī Rāma (the Delighter of Raghus) had taken up His abode at Chitrakūṭa. The Moon of the solar race fell prostrate when He saw the holy company coming with a cheerful countenance. The hermits pressed Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line) to their bosom and invoked their blessings on Him just in order to see them come true As they gazed on the beauty of Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa (Sumitrā's son) and Rama, they accounted all their spiritual practices fully rewarded.

(1—4)

दो०—जथाजोग सनमानि प्रभु बिदा किए मुनिबृंद ।
करहिं जोग जप जाग तप निज आश्रमन्हि सुछंद ॥ १३४ ॥

After paying them due honours the Lord dismissed the holy throng and they practised Yoga (contemplation), Japa (muttering of prayers) and austerities and performed sacrifices unmolested in their own retreats. (134)

चौ०—यह सुधि कोल किरातन्ह पाई । हरषे जनु नव निधि घर आई ॥
कंद मूल फल भरि भरि दोना । चले रंक जनु लूटन सोना ॥ १ ॥
तिन्ह महँ जिन्ह देखे दोउ भ्राता । अपर तिन्हहि पूँछहिं मगु जाता ॥
कहत सुनत रघुबीर निकाई । आइ सबन्हि देखे रघुराई ॥ २ ॥
करहिं जोहारु भेंट धरि आगे । प्रभुहि बिलोकहिं अति अनुरागे ॥
चित्र लिखे जनु जहँ तहँ ठाढ़े । पुलक सरीर नयन जल बाढ़े ॥ ३ ॥
राम सनेह मगन सब जाने । कहि प्रिय बचन सकल सनमाने ॥
प्रभुहि जोहारि बहोरि बहोरी । बचन बिनीत कहहिं कर जोरी ॥ ४ ॥

When the Kols and Bhils got this news, they felt as delighted as though the nine heavenly treasures of Kubera had found their way to their own house. With cups of leaves full of bulbs, roots and fruits they sallied forth as paupers to gather gold as spoils. Such of them as had already seen the two brothers were questioned about them by others who proceeded

along the same road. Describing and hearing of Srī Rāma's beauty they all came and beheld the Lord of Raghus. Placing their offerings before the Lord they greeted Him and regarded Him with deep affection. They stood here and there as so many painted figures, thrilling all over and with tears streaming from their eyes. Srī Rāma perceived that they were all overwhelmed with emotion and addressing kind words to them treated them all with honour; while they in their turn greeted the Lord again and again and with joined palms spoke to Him in polite terms:— (1–4)

दो०—अब हम नाथ सनाथ सब भए देखि प्रभु पाय।
भाग हमारें आगमनु राउर कोसलराय ॥ १३५ ॥

"Having seen Your feet, O Lord, we all feel secure now. Our good-luck is responsible for Your visit to this place, O Lord of Ayodhyā. (135)

चौ०—धन्य भूमि बन पंथ पहारा। जहँ जहँ नाथ पाउ तुम्ह धारा ॥
धन्य बिहग मृग काननचारी। सफल जनम भए तुम्हहि निहारी ॥ १ ॥
हम सब धन्य सहित परिवारा। दीख दरसु भरि नयन तुम्हारा ॥
कीन्ह बासु भल ठाउँ बिचारी। इहाँ सकल रितु रहब सुखारी ॥ २ ॥
हम सब भाँति करब सेवकाई। करि केहरि अहि बाघ बराई ॥
बन बेहड़ गिरि कंदर खोहा। सब हमार प्रभु पग पग जोहा ॥ ३ ॥
तहँ तहँ तुम्हहि अहेर खेलाउब। सर निरझर जलठाउँ देखाउब ॥
हम सेवक परिवार समेता। नाथ न सकुचब आयसु देता ॥ ४ ॥

"Blessed is the land, forest, road and hill where You have planted Your foot, my Lord. Fortunate are the birds and beasts of the forest, whose life has been crowned by Your sight. And lucky are we all along with our family in that we have been able to feast our eyes on Your beauty. You have chosen an excellent spot whereon to take up Your abode; You will be comfortable here during all the seasons. We will render all sorts of services to You keeping away elephants and lions, serpents and tigers. The dreary forest, hills, caves and ravines have all been explored by us foot by foot, O Lord. We will take You for hunting to the different haunts of game and will show You lakes and springs and other reservoirs of water. We and our people are Your servants; therefore, do not hesitate to command us, O Lord." (1–4)

दो०—बेद बचन मुनि मन अगम ते प्रभु करुना ऐन।
बचन किरातन्ह के सुनत जिमि पितु बालक बैन ॥ १३६ ॥

The same gracious Lord whom Vedic texts fail to describe and the mind of hermits cannot reach listened to the words of the Bhils even as a father listens to the words of his children. (136)

चौ०—रामहि केवल प्रेमु पिआरा। जानि लेउ जो जाननिहारा ॥
राम सकल बनचर तब तोषे। कहि मृदु बचन प्रेम परिपोषे ॥ १ ॥

बिदा किए सिर नाइ सिधाए। प्रभु गुन कहत सुनत घर आए॥
एहि बिधि सिय समेत दोउ भाई। बसहिं बिपिन सुर मुनि सुखदाई॥ २॥
जब तें आइ रहे रघुनायकु। तब तें भयउ बनु मंगलदायकु॥
फूलहिं फलहिं बिटप बिधि नाना। मंजु बलित बर बेलि बिताना॥ ३॥
सुरतरु सरिस सुभायँ सुहाए। मनहुँ बिबुध बन परिहरि आए॥
गुंज मंजुतर मधुकर श्रेनी। त्रिबिध बयारि बहइ सुख देनी॥ ४॥

Love alone attracts Śrī Rāma: let those who are curious take note of it. Śrī Rāma then gratified all the foresters by addressing to them gentle words sweetened by love. Dismissed by Him they bowed their head to Him and departed; and discussing the virtues of the Lord they returned to their respective homes. In this way Sītā and the two brothers lived in the forest, delighting the gods and hermits. Ever since the Lord of Raghus came and took up His abode there the forest became a fountain of blessings. Trees of various kinds blossomed and bore fruit and lovely creepers that coiled about them formed an excellent canopy. They were all naturally beautiful like the trees of heaven; it seemed as if the latter had abandoned the celestial groves and migrated to that spot. Strings of bees made an exceedingly sweet humming sound and a delightful breeze breathed soft, cool and fragrant. (1–4)

दो०—नीलकंठ कलकंठ सुक चातक चक्क चकोर।
भाँति भाँति बोलहिं बिहग श्रवन सुखद चित चोर॥ १३७॥

The blue jay, cuckoos, parrots, Chātakas, Chakrawākas, Chakoras and other birds delighted the ear and ravished the soul with their varied notes. (137)

चौ०—करि केहरि कपि कोल कुरंगा। बिगतबैर बिचरहिं सब संगा॥
फिरत अहेर राम छबि देखी। होहिं मुदित मृगबृंद बिसेषी॥ १॥
बिबुध बिपिन जहँ लगि जग माहीं। देखि रामबनु सकल सिहाहीं॥
सुरसरि सरसइ दिनकर कन्या। मेकलसुता गोदावरि धन्या॥ २॥
सब सर सिंधु नदीं नद नाना। मंदाकिनि कर करहिं बखाना॥
उदय अस्त गिरि अरु कैलासू। मंदर मेरु सकल सुरबासू॥ ३॥
सैल हिमाचल आदिक जेते। चित्रकूट जसु गावहिं तेते॥
बिंधि मुदित मन सुखु न समाई। श्रम बिनु बिपुल बड़ाई पाई॥ ४॥

Elephants, lions, monkeys, boars and deer, all sported together, free from enmity. Herds of deer were enraptured when they beheld the beauty of Śrī Rāma roaming about in search of prey. All the forests of gods existing in the universe were filled with envy at the sight of Śrī Rāma's forest. The heavenly river (Gangā), Saraswatī, the Sun-born Yamunā, Narmadā (the daughter of Mount Mekala), the blessed Godāvarī and the various other lakes, seas, streams and rivers, all extolled the Mandākinī. The eastern and western hills (from and behind which the sun is believed to emerge and disappear every morning and evening), Mounts Kailāsa (the abode of Lord Śiva)

Mandara, Meru, all abodes of gods, and mountains like the Himalayas, all sang praises of Chitrakūṭa. Glad was the deity presiding over the Vindhya range *, whose delight was more than his heart could contain, to think that he had won such great renown without much exertion. (1—4)

दो०—चित्रकूट के बिहग मृग बेलि बिटप तृन जाति।
पुन्य पुंज सब धन्य अस कहहिं देव दिन राति ॥ १३८ ॥

"Blessed and full of merit are all the birds and deer, creepers, trees and the various species of herbage of Chitrakūṭa," so declare the gods day and night. (138)

चौ०—नयनवंत रघुबरहि बिलोकी। पाइ जनम फल होहिं बिसोकी ॥
परसि चरन रज अचर सुखारी। भए परम पद के अधिकारी ॥ १ ॥
सो बनु सैलु सुभायँ सुहावन। मंगलमय अति पावन पावन ॥
महिमा कहिअ कवनि बिधि तासू। सुखसागर जहँ कीन्ह निवासू ॥ २ ॥
पय पयोधि तजि अवध बिहाई। जहँ सिय लखनु रामु रहे आई ॥
कहि न सकहिं सुषमा जसि कानन। जौं सत सहस होहिं सहसानन ॥ ३ ॥
सो मैं बरनि कहौं बिधि केहीं। डाबर कमठ कि मंदर लेहीं ॥
सेवहिं लखनु करम मन बानी। जाइ न सीलु सनेहु बखानी ॥ ४ ॥

Having beheld the Chief of Raghu's line those who had eyes attained the end of their life and were rid of sorrow; whereas inanimate objects rejoiced at the touch of the very dust His feet and became eligible for attaining the highest state (blessedness). The forest and hill where that Ocean of Bliss (Śrī Rāma) took up His abode were naturally lovely, auspicious and the holiest of the holy; how could it be possible to glorify them ? The exquisite beauty of the forest where Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and Śrī Rāma came and settled, taking leave of the ocean of milk and bidding adieu to Ayodhyā, could not be described even by a hundred thousand Śeṣas (each with a thousand pairs of tongues). How, then, can I describe it at some length any more than a tortoise living in a puddle can lift Mount Mandara ? Lakṣmaṇa waited upon Śrī Rāma in thought, word and deed with an amiability and devotion more than one could tell. (1—4)

दो०—छिनु छिनु लखि सिय राम पद जानि आपु पर नेहु।
करत न सपनेहुँ लखनु चितु बंधु मातु पितु गेहु ॥ १३९ ॥

Gazing on the feet of Sītā and Śrī Rāma every moment and conscious of their love for him, Lakṣmaṇa never recalled even in a dream his younger brother (Śatrughna), father, mother or even his home. (139)

* Chitrakūṭa being a peak of the Vindhya mountains, the glory of the former is naturally shared by the latter. It is on this account that joyfulness is attributed to the range itself.

चौ०—राम संग सिय रहति सुखारी । पुर परिजन गृह सुरति बिसारी ॥
छिनु छिनु पिय बिधु बदनु निहारी । प्रमुदित मनहुँ चकोरकुमारी ॥ १ ॥
नाह नेहु नित बढ़त बिलोकी । हरषित रहति दिवस जिमि कोकी ॥
सिय मनु राम चरन अनुरागा । अवध सहस सम बनु प्रिय लागा ॥ २ ॥
परनकुटी प्रिय प्रियतम संगा । प्रिय परिवारु कुरंग बिहंगा ॥
सासु ससुर सम मुनितिय मुनिबर । असनु अमिअ सम कंद मूल फर ॥ ३ ॥
नाथ साथ साँथरी सुहाई । मयन सयन सय सम सुखदाई ॥
लोकप होहिं बिलोकत जासू । तेहि कि मोहि सक बिषय बिलासू ॥ ४ ॥

In Śrī Rāma's company Sītā lived a happy life, forgetting Her town (Ayodhyā), family and home. Ever watching the moonlike face of Her beloved lord She was extremely glad like the young of a Chakora bird. Finding Her lord's affection grow from day to day She remained happy as a Chakrawāka bird during the day. Her mind was so enamoured of Śrī Rāma's feet that the forest appeared to Her as dear as a thousand Ayodhyās. Dear was the hut of leaves in the company of Her most beloved lord, while fawns and birds constituted Her beloved family. The holy hermits appeared to Her as Her own father-in-law and their spouses as Her mother-in-law; while Her diet consisting of bulbs, roots and fruits tasted like ambrosia. Shared with Her spouse even the lovely litter of leaves delighted Her as hundreds of Cupid's own beds. Can the charm of sensuous enjoyments ever enchant Her whose very look confers the sovereignty of a sphere. (1—4)

दो०—सुमिरत रामहि तजहिं जन तृन सम बिषय बिलासु ।
रामप्रिया जग जननि सिय कछु न आचरजु तासु ॥ १४० ॥

Fixing their thoughts on Śrī Rāma, His devotees spurn the pleasures of sense as worth no more than a piece of straw. It is no wonder, then, in the case of Sītā, Śrī Rāma's beloved Consort and the Mother of the universe. (140)

चौ०—सीय लखन जेहि बिधि सुखु लहहीं । सोइ रघुनाथ करहिं सोइ कहहीं ॥
कहहिं पुरातन कथा कहानी । सुनहिं लखनु सिय अति सुखु मानी ॥ १ ॥
जब जब रामु अवध सुधि करहीं । तब तब बारि बिलोचन भरहीं ॥
सुमिरि मातु पितु परिजन भाई । भरत सनेहु सीलु सेवकाई ॥ २ ॥
कृपासिंधु प्रभु होहिं दुखारी । धीरजु धरहिं कुसमउ बिचारी ॥
लखि सिय लखनु बिकल होइ जाहीं । जिमि पुरुषहि अनुसर परिछाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
प्रिया बंधु गति लखि रघुनंदनु । धीर कृपाल भगत उर चंदनु ॥
लगे कहन कछु कथा पुनीता । सुनि सुखु लहहिं लखनु अरु सीता ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord of Raghus would do and say only that which would please Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. He would narrate old legends and stories, to which Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā would listen with great delight. Every time Śrī Rāma thought of Ayodhyā His eyes filled with tears. The gracious Lord became sad when He recalled His father and mother, His family and brothers and particularly the affection,

amiability and devotion of Bharata; but He recovered Himself when He realized that the time was unpropitious. Perceiving this, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa felt distressed even as the shadow of a man behaves just like him. When He saw the condition of His beloved Consort and His brother (Lakṣmaṇa), the self-possessed and compassionate Rāma, the Delighter of Raghus and the Soother of His devotees' heart, began to narrate some sacred legends, hearing which Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā felt relieved.

(1—4)

दो०—रामु लखन सीता सहित सोहत परन निकेत ।
जिमि बासव बस अमरपुर सची जयंत समेत ॥ १४१ ॥

Accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā Śrī Rāma shone in His hut of leaves even as Indra who dwells in the city of immortals with his spouse, Śachī, and his son, Jayanta.

(141)

चौ०—जोगवहिं प्रभु सिय लखनहि कैसें । पलक बिलोचन गोलक जैसें ॥
सेवहिं लखनु सीय रघुबीरहि । जिमि अबिबेकी पुरुष सरीरहि ॥ १ ॥
एहि बिधि प्रभु बन बसहिं सुखारी । खग मृग सुर तापस हितकारी ॥
कहेउँ राम बन गवनु सुहावा । सुनहु सुमंत्र अवध जिमि आवा ॥ २ ॥
फिरेउ निषादु प्रभुहि पहुँचाई । सचिव सहित रथ देखेसि आई ॥
मंत्री बिकल बिलोकि निषादू । कहि न जाइ जस भयउ बिषादू ॥ ३ ॥
राम राम सिय लखन पुकारी । परेउ धरनितल ब्याकुल भारी ॥
देखि दखिन दिसि हय हिहिनाहीं । जनु बिनु पंख बिहग अकुलाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord watched over Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa in the same way as the eyelids protect the eyeballs; while Lakṣmaṇa in his turn waited upon Sītā and Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's race) just as a fool (who identifies himself with his body) tends his own body. In this way the Lord, who was as friendly to birds and fawns as to gods and ascetics, lived happily in the forest. Thus have I told the delightful story of Śrī Rāma's journey to the woods; now hear how Sumantra reached Ayodhyā. When the Niṣāda chief returned after escorting the Lord, he saw the minister (Sumantra) with the chariot. The minister was distressed to see the Niṣāda chief; words fail to describe the agony which he felt at the moment. Crying out "Rāma, Rāma, Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa" he (Sumantra) dropped on the ground utterly helpless; while the horses kept looking on to the south and neighed. They were as restless as birds shorn of their wings.

(1—4)

दो०—नहिं तृन चरहिं न पिअहिं जलु मोचहिं लोचन बारि ।
ब्याकुल भए निषाद सब रघुबर बाजि निहारि ॥ १४२ ॥

They would neither eat grass nor drink water; while their eyes kept shedding tears. The whole party of Niṣādas was distressed to see the horses of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line).

(142)

चौ०—धरि धीरजु तब कहइ निषादू । अब सुमंत्र परिहरहु बिषादू ॥
तुम्ह पंडित परमारथ ग्याता । धरहु धीर लखि बिमुख बिधाता ॥ १ ॥

बिबिधि कथा कहि कहि मृदु बानी । रथ बैठारेउ बरबस आनी ॥
सोक सिथिल रथु सकइ न हाँकी । रघुबर बिरह पीर उर बाँकी ॥ २ ॥
चरफराहिं मग चलहिं न घोरे । बनमृग मनहुँ आनि रथ जोरे ॥
अढ़ुकि परहिं फिरि हेरहिं पीछें । राम बियोगि बिकल दुख तीछें ॥ ३ ॥
जो कह रामु लखनु बैदेही । हिंकरि हिंकरि हित हेरहिं तेही ॥
बाजि बिरह गति कहि किमि जाती । बिनु मनि फनिक बिकल जेहि भाँती ॥ ४ ॥

Then, recovering himself, the Niṣāda said, "Sumantra, cease sorrowing now. You are a man of wisdom and a knower of the highest truth; therefore, compose yourself realizing that Fate is unpropitious to you." Narrating various legends in soft accents, he took him by force and seated him in the chariot. But overpowered by grief he could not drive the chariot; the agony of separation from Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line) was severe in his heart. The horses would not move along the road; they were getting fidgety. It seemed as if wild animals had been caught and put in harness. They would topple down and turn to look behind, torn away from Rāma and smarting with deep anguish. If anyone mentioned the name of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa or Sītā, (Janaka's Daughter), they would start neighing and regard him with love. How could anyone describe the anguish of separation the horses felt; they were as restless as a snake robbed of its gem. (1—4)

दो०—भयउ निषादु बिषादबस देखत सचिव तुरंग ।
बोलि सुसेवक चारि तब दिए सारथी संग ॥ १४३ ॥

The Niṣāda was overcome with grief as he beheld the minister and his horses. He then called four trusted grooms and sent them with the charioteer (Sumantra). (143)

चौ०—गुह सारथिहि फिरेउ पहुँचाई । बिरहु बिषादु बरनि नहिं जाई ॥
चले अवध लेइ रथहि निषादा । होहिं छनहिं छन मगन बिषादा ॥ १ ॥
सोच सुमंत्र बिकल दुख दीना । धिग जीवन रघुबीर बिहीना ॥
रहिहि न अंतहुँ अधम सरीरू । जसु न लहेउ बिछुरत रघुबीरू ॥ २ ॥
भए अजस अघ भाजन प्राना । कवन हेतु नहिं करत पयाना ॥
अहह मंद मनु अवसर चूका । अजहुँ न हृदय होत दुइ टूका ॥ ३ ॥
मीजि हाथ सिरु धुनि पछिताई । मनहुँ कृपन धन रासि गवाँई ॥
बिरिद बाँधि बर बीरु कहाई । चलेउ समर जनु सुभट पराई ॥ ४ ॥

Seeing off the charioteer, Guha returned; the agony of his separation was too deep for words. And the Niṣādas drove off to Ayodhyā, plunged in sorrow every moment. Agitated and stricken with grief Sumantra lamented: "Accursed is life without the Hero of Raghu's race. This wretched body will not survive in the long run; but what a pity it did not earn fame by perishing at the time of its parting from the Hero of Raghu's race. This life has become a sink of infamy and sin; I wonder what prevents it from departing. Alas! this vile soul has missed its chance. Oh, that my heart does not

break in twain even now!" Wringing his hands and beating his head he rued his lot like a miser who has lost his hoard of riches. It seemed as if after assuming the role of, and posing as, an eminent hero, a great warrior had taken to flight.

(1—4)

दो०—बिप्र बिबेकी बेदबिद संमत साधु सुजाति ।
जिमि धोखें मदपान कर सचिव सोच तेहि भाँति ॥ १४४ ॥

The minister gave himself up to grief like a discreet Brahman of noble descent, who though well-versed in the Vedas and esteemed by the virtuous, has been deluded into drinking. (144)

चौ०—जिमि कुलीन तिय साधु सयानी । पतिदेवता करम मन बानी ॥
रहै करम बस परिहरि नाहू । सचिव हृदयँ तिमि दारुन दाहू ॥ १ ॥
लोचन सजल डीठि भइ थोरी । सुनइ न श्रवन बिकल मति भोरी ॥
सूखहिं अधर लागि मुहँ लाटी । जिउ न जाइ उर अवधि कपाटी ॥ २ ॥
बिबरन भयउ न जाइ निहारी । मारेसि मनहुँ पिता महतारी ॥
हानि गलानि बिपुल मन ब्यापी । जमपुर पंथ सोच जिमि पापी ॥ ३ ॥
बचनु न आव हृदयँ पछिताई । अवध काह मैं देखब जाई ॥
राम रहित रथ देखिहि जोई । सकुचिहि मोहि बिलोकत सोई ॥ ४ ॥

The minister felt in his heart agony as terrible as that of a virtuous and discreet lady of high birth who is devoted to her lord in thought, word and deed and who is compelled by evil destiny to live apart from her husband. His eyes were full of tears and lacking in vision, his ears deaf and his mind was agitated and confused. Nay, his lips were getting dry and his tongue had cleaved to the palate; yet his life-breath did not depart, the term of exile serving as a door to prevent its departure from his heart. He had turned pale and repelled the sight as if he had murdered his own father and mother. Great was the despondency which preyed upon his mind as a result of the loss he had just suffered; he looked like a sinner mourning while on his way to the abode of Death. Words failed him and he lamented within himself: "What shall I see on reaching Ayodhyā? Whoever shall find the chariot devoid of Rāma will shun my sight.

(1—4)

दो०—धाइ पूँछिहहिं मोहि जब बिकल नगर नर नारि ।
उतरु देब मैं सबहि तब हृदयँ बज्रु बैठारि ॥ १४५ ॥

"When the agitated citizens run to make enquiries of me, I shall answer them all with a heavy load on my heart. (145)

चौ०—पुछिहहिं दीन दुखित सब माता । कहब काह मैं तिन्हहि बिधाता ॥
पूछिहि जबहिं लखन महतारी । कहिहउँ कवन सँदेस सुखारी ॥ १ ॥
राम जननि जब आइहि धाई । सुमिरि बच्छु जिमि धेनु लवाई ॥
पूँछत उतरु देब मैं तेही । गे बनु राम लखनु बैदेही ॥ २ ॥

जोइ पूँछिहि तेहि ऊतरु देबा । जाइ अवध अब यहु सुखु लेबा ॥
पूँछिहि जबहिं राउ दुख दीना । जिवनु जासु रघुनाथ अधीना ॥ ३ ॥
देहउँ उतरु कौनु मुहु लाई । आयउँ कुसल कुअँर पहुँचाई ॥
सुनत लखन सिय राम सँदेसू । तृन जिमि तनु परिहरिहि नरेसू ॥ ४ ॥

"When all the helpless and afflicted mothers question me, good God, what shall I say to them? When Lakṣmaṇa's mother (Sumitrā) puts questions to me, what glad tidings shall I convey to her? And when Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) comes running like a cow that has recently borne a calf and has her thoughts fixed on it, the only answer I can make to her queries will be "Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā (Videha's Daughter) have left for the woods." Whosoever questions me must be answered; this is the treat I shall have on reaching Ayodhyā. Again, when the king, who is oppressed by grief and whose life hangs on Rāma, puts questions to me, with what face shall I tell him in reply that having safely escorted the princes I have come back? The moment he hears the news of Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and Rāma the king will drop his body like a piece of straw.
(1—4)

दो०—हृदउ न बिदरेउ पंक जिमि बिछुरत प्रीतमु नीरु ।
जानत हौं मोहि दीन्ह बिधि यहु जातना सरीरु ॥ १४६ ॥

"The swampy ground of my heart did not crack even though the moisture in the shape of my most beloved Rāma has left. From this I conclude that in this very frame God has endowed me with a body* fit for suffering the tortures of hell."
(146)

चौ०—एहि बिधि करत पंथ पछितावा । तमसा तीर तुरत रथु आवा ॥
बिदा किए करि बिनय निषादा । फिरे पायँ परि बिकल बिषादा ॥ १ ॥
पैठत नगर सचिव सकुचाई । जनु मारेसि गुर बाँभन गाई ॥
बैठि बिटप तर दिवसु गवाँवा । साँझ समय तब अवसरु पावा ॥ २ ॥
अवध प्रबेसु कीन्ह अँधिआरें । पैठ भवन रथु राखि दुआरें ॥
जिन्ह जिन्ह समाचार सुनि पाए । भूप द्वार रथु देखन आए ॥ ३ ॥
रथु पहिचानि बिकल लखि घोरे । गरहिं गात जिमि आतप ओरे ॥
नगर नारि नर ब्याकुल कैसें । निघटत नीर मीनगन जैसें ॥ ४ ॥

While Sumantra was thus lamenting on the way, his chariot presently reached the bank of the Tamasā river. He politely dismissed the Niṣādas, who fell at his feet and returned with a heart stricken with grief. The minister hesitated to enter the city as if he had murdered his own preceptor, killed a Brahman or

*It is mentioned in the scriptures that sinners who are condemned to hell are endowed with a subtle body (known by the name of Yātanā-Sarira), which though subjected to tortures in various forms is wonderfully tenacious and does not perish till the sinner has served the sentence.

butchered a cow. He passed the day sitting under a tree and found his opportunity only when it was dusk. He entered Ayodhyā in the dark and slunk into the palace leaving the chariot at the gate. All who heard the news flocked to the entrance of the royal palace to see the chariot When they recognized the chariot and found the horses restless with their body wasting away as hail in the sun, the citizens, both men and women, were sore distressed as fish when the water runs short. (1—4)

दो०—सचिव आगमनु सुनत सबु बिकल भयउ रनिवासु ।
भवनु भयंकरु लाग तेहि मानहुँ प्रेत निवासु ॥ १४७ ॥

The moment they heard of the minister's arrival the whole gynaeceum was restless. To him the palace looked as dreary as though it were an abode of spirits. (147)

चौ०—अति आरति सब पूँछहिं रानी । उतरु न आव बिकल भइ बानी ॥
सुनइ न श्रवन नयन नहिं सूझा । कहहु कहाँ नृपु तेहि तेहि बूझा ॥ १ ॥
दासिन्ह दीख सचिव बिकलाई । कौसल्या गृहँ गईं लवाई ॥
जाइ सुमंत्र दीख कस राजा । अमिअ रहित जनु चंदु बिराजा ॥ २ ॥
आसन सयन बिभूषन हीना । परेउ भूमितल निपट मलीना ॥
लेइ उसासु सोच एहि भाँती । सुरपुर तें जनु खँसेउ जजाती ॥ ३ ॥
लेत सोच भरि छिनु छिनु छाती । जनु जरि पंख परेउ संपाती ॥
राम राम कह राम सनेही । पुनि कह राम लखन बैदेही ॥ ४ ॥

In deep agony all the queens questioned him; but no reply came from him, his voice failed him. His ears could not hear, nor could his eyes see; he asked whomsoever he met: "Tell me, where is the king ?" Seeing his confusion, the maid-servants conducted him to Kausalyā's apartments. Arriving there Sumantra found the king as pale and lustreless as the moon without nectar. Without a seat, couch or ornaments he lay on the ground in a most wretched condition. Heaving a sigh he lamented even as Yayāti* when he had fallen from the abode of gods. With his heart bursting with grief every moment, he looked like Sampātī† who had dropped from the heavens on account of his wings having been singed. That great lover of Rāma cried "Rāma, Rāma" and again "Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā." (1—4)

दो०—देखि सचिवँ जय जीव कहि कीन्हेउ दंड प्रनामु ।
सुनत उठेउ ब्याकुल नृपति कहु सुमंत्र कहँ रामु ॥ १४८ ॥

---

* As a reward for the many sacrifices performed by him during his life-time King Yayāti ascended to heaven. Indra received him most courteously and encouraged him to speak highly of his own meritorious acts. In this way he unwittingly exhausted all his merits and was hurled back to the mortal plane.

† For the story of Sampātī see the Chaupāis following Dohā 26 *et seq* in *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa.*

The minister, on seeing the king, exclaimed, "Be victorious and live long!" and made obeisance to him by falling prostrate on the ground. The moment he heard this the king rose in bewilderment and said, "Tell me, Sumantra, where is Rāma?" (148)

चौ०—भूप सुमंत्रु लीन्ह उर लाई । बूड़त कछु अधार जनु पाई ॥
सहित सनेह निकट बैठारी । पूँछत राउ नयन भरि बारी ॥ १ ॥
राम कुसल कहु सखा सनेही । कहँ रघुनाथु लखनु बैदेही ॥
आने फेरि कि बनहि सिधाए । सुनत सचिव लोचन जल छाए ॥ २ ॥
सोक बिकल पुनि पूँछ नरेसू । कहु सिय राम लखन संदेसू ॥
राम रूप गुन सील सुभाऊ । सुमिरि सुमिरि उर सोचत राऊ ॥ ३ ॥
राउ सुनाइ दीन्ह बनबासू । सुनि मन भयउ न हरषु हराँसू ॥
सो सुत बिछुरत गए न प्राना । को पापी बड़ मोहि समाना ॥ ४ ॥

The king pressed Sumantra to his bosom as if a drowning man had laid hold of some support. Seating him affectionately by his side and with his eyes full of tears the king asked him: "Apprize me of Rāma's welfare, O loving friend; where are Rāma (the Lord of Raghus), Lakṣmana and Videha's daughter (Sītā)? Have you brought them back or have they left for the woods?" At these words tears rushed to the minister's eyes. Overwhelmed with grief the king asked again, "Tell me the news about Sītā, Rāma and Lakṣmana." Recalling again and again Śrī Rāma's beauty, virtues, amiability and temperament the king sorrowed within himself: "Proclaiming my intention to instal him as Regent I exiled him to the woods; but the news neither delighted his soul nor grieved it. But my life did not depart even though I had to part from such a son! Who can be such a great sinner as I? (1—4)

दो०—सखा रामु सिय लखनु जहँ तहाँ मोहि पहुँचाउ ।
नाहिं त चाहत चलन अब प्रान कहउँ सतिभाउ ॥ १४९ ॥

"Take me, my friend, to the place where Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmana are. If not, I sincerely tell you, my life is going to depart very soon." (149)

चौ०—पुनि पुनि पूँछत मंत्रिहि राऊ । प्रियतम सुअन सँदेस सुनाऊ ॥
करहि सखा सोइ बेगि उपाऊ । रामु लखनु सिय नयन देखाऊ ॥ १ ॥
सचिव धीर धरि कह मृदु बानी । महाराज तुम्ह पंडित ग्यानी ॥
बीर सुधीर धुरंधर देवा । साधु समाजु सदा तुम्ह सेवा ॥ २ ॥
जनम मरन सब दुख सुख भोगा । हानि लाभु प्रिय मिलन बियोगा ॥
काल करम बस होहिं गोसाईं । बरबस राति दिवस की नाईं ॥ ३ ॥
सुख हरषहिं जड़ दुख बिलखाहीं । दोउ सम धीर धरहिं मन माहीं ॥
धीरज धरहु बिबेकु बिचारी । छाड़िअ सोच सकल हितकारी ॥ ४ ॥

Again and again the king asked the minister; "Communicate to me the news of my most beloved sons. Quickly contrive, my friend, some means whereby you may be able to bring before my eyes Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā."

Recovering himself the minister gently replied, "Your Majesty is learned and wise. Nay, you are a leader of the brave and courageous, my lord, and have always attended assemblies of holy men. Birth and death, all painful and pleasurable experiences, loss and gain, union with and separation from friends—all these, my lord, take place under the unalterable laws of time and destiny like the succession of night and day. Fools rejoice in prosperity and mourn in adversity; while the wise account both alike. Therefore, exercising your mature judgment take up courage and cease sorrowing, O friend of all. (1—4)

दो०—प्रथम बासु तमसा भयउ दूसर सुरसरि तीर ।
न्हाइ रहे जलपानु करि सिय समेत दोउ बीर ॥ १५० ॥

"Their first halt was made by the side of the Tamasā and the next on the bank of the celestial river (Gaṅgā). Having bathed and drunk water, Sītā and the two brothers remained without food that day. (150)

चौ०—केवट कीन्हि बहुत सेवकाई । सो जामिनि सिंगरौर गवाँई ॥
होत प्रात बट छीरु मगावा । जटा मुकुट निज सीस बनावा ॥ १ ॥
राम सखाँ तब नाव मगाई । प्रिया चढ़ाइ चढ़े रघुराई ॥
लखन बान धनु धरे बनाई । आपु चढ़े प्रभु आयसु पाई ॥ २ ॥
बिकल बिलोकि मोहि रघुबीरा । बोले मधुर बचन धरि धीरा ॥
तात प्रनामु तात सन कहेहू । बार बार पद पंकज गहेहू ॥ ३ ॥
करबि पायँ परि बिनय बहोरी । तात करिअ जनि चिंता मोरी ॥
बन मग मंगल कुसल हमारें । कृपा अनुग्रह पुन्य तुम्हारें ॥ ४ ॥

"The Niṣāda showed great hospitality and the party spent that night in the village of Singraur (Śṛṅgaverapura). At daybreak they sent for the milk of the banyan tree and the two brothers coiled up their matted hair in the shape of a crown. Then Rāma's friend (Guha) called for a boat and after helping Sītā to board it Śrī Rāma followed suit. Lakṣmaṇa placed on it in an orderly way the two bows and quivers and himself boarded the boat on receiving the Lord's command. Seeing my distress the Hero of Raghu's race summoned up courage and addressed me in sweet accents: 'Sire, convey my obeisances to dear father and clasp his lotus feet again and again. Then, falling at his feet submit to him thus; 'Father, be not worried on my account. By your grace and goodwill and as a reward of your meritorious acts my journey to and sojourn in the woods will be happy and full of blessings. (1—4)

छं०—तुम्हरें अनुग्रह तात कानन जात सब सुखु पाइहौं ।
प्रतिपालि आयसु कुसल देखन पाय पुनि फिरि आइहौं ॥
जननीं सकल परितोषि परि परि पायँ करि बिनती घनी ।
तुलसी करेहु सोइ जतनु जेहिं कुसली रहहिं कोसल धनी ॥

" 'By your grace, dear father, I shall have all sorts of comforts on my journey and having obeyed your commands shall come back safe to behold your lotus feet once more.' Nay, consoling all my mothers fall at their feet again and again and with profuse entreaties make every effort—says Tulasidāsa—to see that the lord of Ayodhyā (my father) passes his days happily.

सो०—गुर सन कहब सँदेसु बार बार पद पदुम गहि ।
करब सोइ उपदेसु जेहिं न सोच मोहि अवधपति ॥ १५१ ॥

"Clasping my preceptor's lotus feet again and again, give him my message: 'Pray, so exhort the lord of Ayodhyā that he may no longer grieve on my account.' (151)

चौ०—पुरजन परिजन सकल निहोरी । तात सुनाएहु बिनती मोरी ॥
सोइ सब भाँति मोर हितकारी । जातें रह नरनाहु सुखारी ॥ १ ॥
कहब सँदेसु भरत के आएँ । नीति न तजिअ राजपदु पाएँ ॥
पालेहु प्रजहि करम मन बानी । सेएहु मातु सकल सम जानी ॥ २ ॥
ओर निबाहेहु भायप भाई । करि पितु मातु सुजन सेवकाई ॥
तात भाँति तेहि राखब राऊ । सोच मोर जेहिं करै न काऊ ॥ ३ ॥
लखन कहे कछु बचन कठोरा । बरजि राम पुनि मोहि निहोरा ॥
बार बार निज सपथ देवाई । कहबि न तात लखन लरिकाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Humbly approaching all the citizens and all my people, convey to them my submission: 'He alone is my friend in every way, who ensures the king's happiness.' Again, when Bharata comes, give him my message: 'Abandon not the path of rectitude on assuming the office of Regent. Cherish your subjects in thought, word and deed and serve your mothers treating them all alike. Again, brother, vindicate your brotherliness till the last day by serving our parents and kinsmen. And last but not the least look after the king in such a way that he may never sorrow on my account.' Here Lakṣmaṇa interposed some harsh words, but Rāma checked him and then entreated me adjuring me by himself again and again, 'Make no mention, dear father, of Lakṣmaṇa's childishness.' (1—4)

दो०—कहि प्रनामु कछु कहन लिय सिय भइ सिथिल सनेह ।
थकित बचन लोचन सजल पुलक पल्लवित देह ॥ १५२ ॥

"Sending her greetings Sītā opened her lips to say something but was overwhelmed with emotion. Her voice failed, her eyes filled with tears and a thrill ran through her body. (152)

चौ०—तेहि अवसर रघुबर रुख पाई । केवट पारहि नाव चलाई ॥
रघुकुलतिलक चले एहि भाँती । देखउँ ठाढ़ कुलिस धरि छाती ॥ १ ॥
मैं आपन किमि कहौं कलेसू । जिअत फिरेउँ लेइ राम सँदेसू ॥
अस कहि सचिव बचन रहि गयऊ । हानि गलानि सोच बस भयऊ ॥ २ ॥

सूत बचन सुनतहिं नरनाहू। परेउ धरनि उर दारुन दाहू॥
तलफत बिषम मोह मन मापा। माजा मनहुँ मीन कहुँ ब्यापा॥ ३॥
करि बिलाप सब रोवहिं रानी। महा बिपति किमि जाइ बखानी॥
सुनि बिलाप दुखहू दुखु लागा। धीरजहू कर धीरजु भागा॥ ४॥

"At this moment, in response to a hint from the Chief of Raghus (Śrī Rāma), the boatman propelled the boat towards the opposite bank. So departed the Crown of Raghu's race, while I stood looking on with a heavy load on my heart. How am I to describe my own anguish in that I came back alive bearing Rāma's message?" At this stage Sumantra's speech failed him, overpowered as he was by grief and remorse due to separation from Śrī Rāma. No sooner had he heard the charioteer's speech than the king dropped to the ground, his heart burning with deep anguish. His mind being unhinged by excessive infatuation he tossed about like a fish that had been inebriated by sucking the foam of early rain water (which is intoxicating to the fish). All the queens wailed and wept; how can their great misfortune be described? At the sound of their wails sorrow itself was sorrowful and endurance could no longer endure. (1—4)

दो०—भयउ कोलाहलु अवध अति सुनि नृप राउर सोरु।
बिपुल बिहग बन परेउ निसि मानहुँ कुलिस कठोरु॥ १५३॥

Ayodhyā was in great tumult at the sound of the outcry in the royal gynaeceum: it seemed as if a cruel thunderbolt had fallen at night on a large habitat of birds. (153)

चौ०—प्रान कंठगत भयउ भुआलू। मनि बिहीन जनु ब्याकुल ब्यालू॥
इंद्रीं सकल बिकल भइँ भारी। जनु सर सरसिज बनु बिनु बारी॥ १॥
कौसल्याँ नृपु दीख मलाना। रबिकुल रबि अँथयउ जियँ जाना॥
उर धरि धीर राम महतारी। बोली बचन समय अनुसारी॥ २॥
नाथ समुझि मन करिअ बिचारू। राम बियोग पयोधि अपारू॥
करनधार तुम्ह अवध जहाजू। चढ़ेउ सकल प्रिय पथिक समाजू॥ ३॥
धीरजु धरिअ त पाइअ पारू। नाहिं त बूड़िहि सबु परिवारू॥
जौं जियँ धरिअ बिनय पिय मोरी। रामु लखनु सिय मिलहिं बहोरी॥ ४॥

The life-breath of the king had now stuck to his throat; he felt uneasy like a serpent robbed of its gem. All his senses were blighted as a cluster of lotuses in a lake that had been left without water. When Kausalyā saw the king withered and blasted, she concluded in her mind that the sun of the solar race was about to set. Summoning up courage, therefore, Śrī Rāma's mother spoke words appropriate to the occasion: "Ponder in your heart, my lord, and reflect that separation from Rāma is a vast ocean, you are the helmsman and Ayodhyā the bark which has been boarded by our near and dear ones as its passengers. We can hope to reach a shore only if you have patience. If not, the whole family will be drowned. If you take to heart this entreaty of mine, my beloved lord, we are sure to see Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā again." (1—4)

दो०—प्रिया बचन मृदु सुनत नृपु चितयउ आँखि उघारि।
तलफत मीन मलीन जनु सींचत सीतल बारि॥ १५४॥

Hearing these soft words of his beloved queen, the king opened his eyes and looked up like a writhing wretched fish that had been sprinkled with cold water. (154)

चौ०—धरि धीरजु उठि बैठ भुआलू। कहु सुमंत्र कहँ राम कृपालू॥
कहाँ लखनु कहँ रामु सनेही। कहँ प्रिय पुत्रबधू बैदेही॥ १॥
बिलपत राउ बिकल बहु भाँती। भइ जुग सरिस सिराति न राती॥
तापस अंध साप सुधि आई। कौसल्यहि सब कथा सुनाई॥ २॥
भयउ बिकल बरनत इतिहासा। राम रहित धिग जीवन आसा॥
सो तनु राखि करब मैं काहा। जेहिं न प्रेम पनु मोर निबाहा॥ ३॥
हा रघुनंदन प्रान पिरीते। तुम्ह बिनु जिअत बहुत दिन बीते॥
हा जानकी लखन हा रघुबर। हा पितु हित चित चातक जलधर॥ ४॥

Recovering himself the king got up and sat down. "Tell me, Sumantra, where is my gracious Rāma? Where is Lakṣmaṇa and where my loving Rāma? Where is my beloved daughter-in-law, Vaidehī?" The restless monarch wailed in many ways; the night seemed to him like an age and he felt as though it would never end. He was reminded of the blind hermit's curse and he narrated the whole story to Kausalyā. He was filled with agony as he related the circumstances*. "Fie on the hope of surviving without Rāma. What shall I gain by preserving this body, which has failed to keep my vow of love? O delighter of Raghus, who are dear to me as life, already I have lived too long without you. Ah, Janaka's daughter and Lakṣmaṇa, Ah, Chief of Raghu's line, who gladdened the loving heart of your father as a rain-cloud delights the Chātaka bird." (1—4)

*The story has been told at length in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki (*Ayodhyākāṇḍa*, Cantos 63-64). One day, when Daśaratha was still young, he was out hunting and rode to the bank of the Sarayū in search of game. The sun had set and the king heard at a distance what he believed to be the trumpeting of a wild elephant. The king, who was expert at hitting an invisible mark by its sound, discharged an arrow and lo! it struck a young hermit, Śravaṇa by name, who had been filling a pitcher for the use of his blind and aged parents. The king discovered to his great chagrin that what he had mistaken for the trumpeting of an elephant had been the gurgling sound caused by the filling of the pitcher. The hermit did not mind his own death; but he was worried about his helpless parents, who wholly depended on him. He, therefore, implored the king to carry the water to the hermitage and inform his parents of what had happened to their son. With these dying words the hermit breathed his last and the king did as he was bid by the young anchorite. Śravaṇa's parents, when they heard of his sad fate, begged the king to conduct them to the place where their son was and in their excessive agony pronounced a curse on the king that he too would die of grief for the loss of a son. It is of this incident that the king is reminded at the hour of his death.

दो०—राम राम कहि राम कहि राम राम कहि राम।
तनु परिहरि रघुबर बिरहँ राउ गयउ सुरधाम ॥ १५५ ॥

Crying "Rāma, Rāma" and again "Rāma" and yet again "Rāma, Rāma, Rāma", the king cast off his body in his agony of separation from the Chief of Raghu's line and ascended to the abode of gods. (155)

चौ०—जिअन मरन फलु दसरथ पावा। अंड अनेक अमल जसु छावा॥
जिअत राम बिधु बदनु निहारा। राम बिरह करि मरनु सँवारा ॥ १ ॥
सोक बिकल सब रोवहिं रानी। रूपु सीलु बलु तेजु बखानी॥
करहिं बिलाप अनेक प्रकारा। परहिं भूमितल बारहिं बारा ॥ २ ॥
बिलपहिं बिकल दास अरु दासी। घर घर रुदनु करहिं पुरबासी॥
अँथयउ आजु भानुकुल भानू। धरम अवधि गुन रूप निधानू ॥ ३ ॥
गारीं सकल कैकइहि देहीं। नयन बिहीन कीन्ह जग जेहीं॥
एहि बिधि बिलपत रैनि बिहानी। आए सकल महामुनि ग्यानी ॥ ४ ॥

It was King Daśaratha who reaped the reward both of his life and death. His untarnished fame spread through a number of universes; as long as he lived he gazed on Śrī Rāma's moonlike countenance and brought glory to his death by making the separation from Śrī Rāma his excuse for it. Stricken with grief all the queens wept and praised his comeliness of form, amiable manners, bodily might and majesty. They lamented in a variety of ways throwing themselves upon the ground again and again. Men-servants and maid-servants alike wailed in anguish and there was weeping in every house throughout the city. "Today has set the sun of the solar race, the perfection of righteousness, the repository of beauty and virtues." Everyone abused Kaikeyī, who had robbed the world of its very eyes. In this way they wailed till the close of night, when all the great and enlightened hermits arrived. (1—4)

दो०—तब बसिष्ठ मुनि समय सम कहि अनेक इतिहास।
सोक नेवारेउ सबहि कर निज बिग्यान प्रकास ॥ १५६ ॥

Then the sage Vasiṣṭha narrated a number of legends befitting the occasion and dispersed the gloom that hung over them all by the light of his wisdom. (156)

चौ०—तेल नावँ भरि नृप तनु राखा। दूत बोलाइ बहुरि अस भाषा॥
धावहु बेगि भरत पहिं जाहू। नृप सुधि कतहुँ कहहु जनि काहू ॥ १ ॥
एतनेइ कहेहु भरत सन जाई। गुर बोलाइ पठयउ दोउ भाई॥
सुनि मुनि आयसु धावन धाए। चले बेग बर बाजि लजाए ॥ २ ॥
अनरथु अवध अरंभेउ जब तें। कुसगुन होहिं भरत कहुँ तब तें॥
देखहिं राति भयानक सपना। जागि करहिं कटु कोटि कलपना ॥ ३ ॥
बिप्र जेवाँइ देहिं दिन दाना। सिव अभिषेक करहिं बिधि नाना॥
मागहिं हृदयँ महेस मनाई। कुसल मातु पितु परिजन भाई ॥ ४ ॥

The sage caused a boat to be filled with oil and had the king's body placed in it (to guard against decomposition); he then summoned envoys and spoke to them thus, "Run quickly and go to Bharata; but break not the news about the king to anyone at any place. Approaching Bharata tell him only this much: 'The preceptor has sent for you two brothers.' " Hearing the sage's orders the couriers rushed along with a speed that would put an excellent steed to shame. Ever since things began to take a vicious turn in Ayodhyā evil omens occurred before Bharata. He saw fearful dreams at night and on waking indulged in all sorts of unpleasant speculations. He would feast Brahmans daily and bestow gifts on them. With elaborate ritual he would sprinkle water over an image of Bhagavān Śiva and invoking the great Lord in his heart, begged of Him the welfare of his parents, family and half-brothers. (1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि सोचत भरत मन धावन पहुँचे आइ।
गुर अनुसासन श्रवन सुनि चले गनेसु मनाइ॥ १५७॥

While Bharata was thus passing an anxious time the couriers arrived. And hearing the Guru's commands he proceeded with an invocation to Lord Ganeśa. (157)

चौ०—चले समीर बेग हय हाँके। नाघत सरित सैल बन बाँके॥
हृदयँ सोचु बड़ कछु न सोहाई। अस जानहिं जियँ जाउँ उड़ाई॥ १॥
एक निमेष बरष सम जाई। एहि बिधि भरत नगर निअराई॥
असगुन होहिं नगर पैठारा। रटहिं कुभाँति कुखेत करारा॥ २॥
खर सिआर बोलहिं प्रतिकूला। सुनि सुनि होइ भरत मन सूला॥
श्रीहत सर सरिता बन बागा। नगरु बिसेषि भयावनु लागा॥ ३॥
खग मृग हय गय जाहिं न जोए। राम बियोग कुरोग बिगोए॥
नगर नारि नर निपट दुखारी। मनहुँ सबन्हि सब संपति हारी॥ ४॥

Urging the horses to run as fast as the wind he went on his journey crossing difficult streams, hills and forests. There was such a great anxiety in his heart that nothing would please him. He thought to himself, "Would that I could fly home." Every moment hung heavy like an year. In this way Bharata drew near to the city. Evil omens occurred to him as he entered the city. Crows cawed in an ominous way at undesirable places. Donkeys and jackals gave a cry that foreboded evil, and which pierced Bharata to the heart as he listened to it. Lakes and rivers, groves and gardens had lost their charm; while the city wore a particularly dismal look. Birds and fawns, horses and elephants were too wretched to look at, undone by the fell disease of separation from Rāma. The people of the city, both men and women, were extremely miserable as though all of them had lost everything they had in their possession. (1—4)

दो०—पुरजन मिलहिं न कहहिं कछु गवँहिं जोहारहिं जाहिं।
भरत कुसल पूँछि न सकहिं भय बिषाद मन माहिं॥ १५८॥

The citizens met him but spoke not a word; they made obeisance and quietly passed on. Bharata too could not enquire after their welfare, his mind being obsessed with fear and grief. (158)

चौ०—हाट बाट नहिं जाइ निहारी। जनु पुर दहँ दिसि लागि दवारी॥
आवत सुत सुनि कैकयनंदिनि। हरषी रबिकुल जलरुह चंदिनि॥ १॥
सजि आरती मुदित उठि धाई। द्वारेहिं भेंटि भवन लेइ आई॥
भरत दुखित परिवारु निहारा। मानहुँ तुहिन बनज बनु मारा॥ २॥
कैकेई हरषित एहि भाँती। मनहुँ मुदित दव लाइ किराती॥
सुतहि ससोच देखि मनु मारें। पूँछति नैहर कुसल हमारें॥ ३॥
सकल कुसल कहि भरत सुनाई। पूँछी निज कुल कुसल भलाई॥
कहु कहँ तात कहाँ सब माता। कहँ सिय राम लखन प्रिय भ्राता॥ ४॥

The bazars and the streets repelled the sight as though a wild conflagration had broken out in the city on all sides. Kaikeyī, who was to the solar race what the moon is to the lotuses, was rejoiced to hear of her son's approach. Preparing lights for waving round his head, she sprang up and ran glad at heart, and meeting him at the very door conducted him into her apartments. Bharata saw with wonder that while the household wore a wretched appearance like a bed of lotuses blasted by frost, Kaikeyī was as happy as a Bhil woman who had set a whole forest ablaze. Seeing her son melancholy and depressed in spirits, she asked him: "Is all well in my mother's house?" Bharata assured her that everything was well and then enquired after the health and welfare of his own family: "Tell me, where is my father and where all mothers, and where is Sītā and my beloved brothers, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa?" (1—4)

दो०—सुनि सुत बचन सनेहमय कपट नीर भरि नैन।
भरत श्रवन मन सूल सम पापिनि बोली बैन॥ १५९॥

On hearing her son's affectionate words the sinful woman brought crocodile tears to her eyes and spoke words that pierced his ears and soul as so many shafts. (159)

चौ०—तात बात मैं सकल सँवारी। भै मंथरा सहाय बिचारी॥
कछुक काज बिधि बीच बिगारेउ। भूपति सुरपति पुर पगु धारेउ॥ १॥
सुनत भरतु भए बिबस बिषादा। जनु सहमेउ करि केहरि नादा॥
तात तात हा तात पुकारी। परे भूमितल ब्याकुल भारी॥ २॥
चलत न देखन पायउँ तोही। तात न रामहि सौंपेहु मोही॥
बहुरि धीर धरि उठे सँभारी। कहु पितु मरन हेतु महतारी॥ ३॥
सुनि सुत बचन कहति कैकेई। मरमु पाँछि जनु माहुर देई॥
आदिहु तें सब आपनि करनी। कुटिल कठोर मुदित मन बरनी॥ ४॥

"I have accomplished everything for you, my son; and poor Mantharā has been of great help to me. Only God has marred our plans a little before they could be completed; the king has departed to Indra's paradise." As soon as he heard this, Bharata was overcome with grief as an elephant who is terrified at the roar of a lion. Crying "Father, father, Ah my father!" he fell to the ground much agitated. "I could not see you before you left, nor did

you, my father, entrust me to the care of Śrī Rāma." Then, collecting himself he got up with some effort and said, "Tell me, mother, the cause of my father's demise." Hearing the words of her son she replied as one who had cut a vital part and inserted poison into it. With a glad heart the cruel and wicked woman recounted from the very beginning all that she had done.

(1—4)

दो०—भरतहि बिसरेउ पितु मरन सुनत राम बन गौनु ।
हेतु अपनपउ जानि जियँ थकित रहे धरि मौनु ॥ १६० ॥

Hearing of Śrī Rāma's exile to the forest Bharata forgot his father's death; and realizing in his heart that he was at the root of it he remained mute and stupefied. (160)

चौ०—बिकल बिलोकि सुतहि समुझावति । मनहुँ जरे पर लोनु लगावति ॥
तात राउ नहिं सोचै जोगू । बिढ़इ सुकृत जसु कीन्हेउ भोगू ॥ १ ॥
जीवत सकल जनम फल पाए । अंत अमरपति सदन सिधाए ॥
अस अनुमानि सोच परिहरहू । सहित समाज राज पुर करहू ॥ २ ॥
सुनि सुठि सहमेउ राजकुमारू । पाकें छत जनु लाग अँगारू ॥
धीरज धरि भरि लेहिं उसासा । पापिनि सबहि भाँति कुल नासा ॥ ३ ॥
जौं पै कुरुचि रही अति तोही । जनमत काहे न मारे मोही ॥
पेड़ काटि तैं पालउ सींचा । मीन जिअन निति बारि उलीचा ॥ ४ ॥

Observing his son's distress she comforted him like one who applied salt to a burn. "The king, my son, is not fit for lamentation. He not only reaped a rich harvest of merit and renown but enjoyed life also. During his life-time he obtained all the rewards of human existence and in the end ascended to the abode of Indra (the lord of immortals). Pondering thus cease sorrowing and rule the kingdom with all its limbs (such as the army, the exchequer, the ministers and so on)." The prince was utterly dismayed to hear these words as though a festering sore had been touched by a live coal. Recovering himself he heaved a deep sigh and said, "O wicked woman, you have brought complete ruin to our family. If you bore such deep malice, why did you not kill me as soon as I was born? Cutting down the tree you have watered a leaf and you have drained the pond for keeping the fish alive.

(1—4)

दो०—हंसबंसु दसरथु जनकु राम लखन से भाइ ।
जननी तूँ जननी भई बिधि सन कछु न बसाइ ॥ १६१ ॥

"Claiming my descent from the sun-god, with King Daśaratha for my father and Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa for my brothers I have had you, mother, for my mother! One is powerless against Providence. (161)

चौ०—जब तैं कुमति कुमत जियँ ठयऊ । खंड खंड होइ हृदउ न गयऊ ॥
बर मागत मन भइ नहिं पीरा । गरि न जीह मुहँ परेउ न कीरा ॥ १ ॥

भूपँ प्रतीति तोरि किमि कीन्ही । मरन काल बिधि मति हरि लीन्ही ॥
बिधिहुँ न नारि हृदय गति जानी । सकल कपट अघ अवगुन खानी ॥ २ ॥
सरल सुसील धरम रत राऊ । सो किमि जानै तीय सुभाऊ ॥
अस को जीव जंतु जग माहीं । जेहि रघुनाथ प्रानप्रिय नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
भे अति अहित रामु तेउ तोही । को तू अहसि सत्य कहु मोही ॥
जो हसि सो हसि मुहँ मसि लाई । आँखि ओट उठि बैठहि जाई ॥ ४ ॥

"The moment, O malicious woman, you contrived this evil design in your mind, how is it your heart did not break into pieces? While asking for the boons you did not feel the stings of conscience, your tongue did not fall off nor did your mouth fester? How did the king trust you? Surely God must have robbed him of his senses on the eve of his death. Even the Creator has not been able to know the working of a woman's heart, the repository of all deceit, sin and vice! Simple, amiable and pious as the king was, how could he know the nature of a woman? What living creature is there in the world, to whom the Lord of Raghus is not dear as life itself? Yet even that Rāma appeared to you as a great enemy. Tell me the truth, therefore, to what species do you belong? Whatever you may be, you had better bedaub your face with ink and leaving my presence remove to some place out of my sight. (1—4)

दो०—राम बिरोधी हृदय तें प्रगट कीन्ह बिधि मोहि ।
मो समान को पातकी बादि कहउँ कछु तोहि ॥ १६२ ॥

"Nay, God has created me out of a heart hostile to Rāma! Who is there so sinful as myself? In vain, therefore, do I taunt you" (162)

चौ०—सुनि सत्रुघुन मातु कुटिलाई । जरहिं गात रिस कछु न बसाई ॥
तेहि अवसर कुबरी तहँ आई । बसन बिभूषन बिबिध बनाई ॥ १ ॥
लखि रिस भरेउ लखन लघु भाई । बरत अनल घृत आहुति पाई ॥
हुमगि लात तकि कूबर मारा । परि मुह भर महि करत पुकारा ॥ २ ॥
कूबर टूटेउ फूट कपारू । दलित दसन मुख रुधिर प्रचारू ॥
आह दइअ मैं काह नसावा । करत नीक फलु अनइस पावा ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि रिपुहन लखि नख सिख खोटी । लगे घसीटन धरि धरि झोंटी ॥
भरत दयानिधि दीन्हि छड़ाई । कौसल्या पहिं गे दोउ भाई ॥ ४ ॥

When Śatrughna heard of mother Kaikeyī's wickedness, he burned all over with rage; but there was no help. That very moment came the hunchback (Mantharā) clad in a variety of rich costumes and adorned with various ornaments. The very sight of that woman filled Lakṣmaṇa's younger brother with anger as though clarified butter had been poured into fire. Springing forward he kicked her with such steady aim at the hump that she fell flat on her face and screamed aloud. Her hump was smashed, her head split and her teeth broken and her mouth emitted blood. "Ah, my God! what harm have I done? Surely this is an ill recompense for my services." Hear-

ing this and seeing her vile from head to foot, Satrughna (the slayer of his foes) seized her by the hair on her head and began to drag her till the merciful Bharata rescued her. The two brothers then called on mother Kausalya.

(1—4)

दो०—मलिन बसन बिबरन बिकल कृस सरीर दुख भार ।
कनक कलप बर बेलि बन मानहुँ हनी तुसार ॥ १६३ ॥

In sordid attire, pale, agitated and oppressed with woe and with a wasted frame she looked like a lovely celestial creeper of gold blasted by frost in the forest. (163)

चौ०—भरतहि देखि मातु उठि धाई । मुरुछित अवनि परी झइँ आई ॥
देखत भरतु बिकल भए भारी । परे चरन तन दसा बिसारी ॥ १ ॥
मातु तात कहँ देहि देखाई । कहँ सिय रामु लखनु दोउ भाई ॥
कैकइ कत जनमी जग माझा । जौं जनमि त भइ काहे न बाँझा ॥ २ ॥
कुल कलंकु जेहिं जनमेउ मोही । अपजस भाजन प्रियजन द्रोही ॥
को तिभुवन मोहि सरिस अभागी । गति असि तोरि मातु जेहि लागी ॥ ३ ॥
पितु सुरपुर बन रघुबर केतू । मैं केवल सब अनरथ हेतू ॥
धिग मोहि भयउँ बेनु बन आगी । दुसह दाह दुख दूषन भागी ॥ ४ ॥

When mother Kausalyā saw Bharata, she sprang up and ran to meet him; but she felt giddy and dropped unconscious on the ground. Bharata was deeply moved to see her plight and threw himself at her feet forgetting the condition of his own body. "Mother, show me my father. Where is Sītā and the two brothers, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa? Why was Kaikeyī born into this world at all? And if born, why did she not remain barren instead of bearing me, a blot on my family, a very sink of infamy and an enemy of near and dear ones? Who in the three spheres is so wretched as I, on whose account, mother, you have been reduced to such a plight. My father is in heaven and Śrī Rāma, the Chief of Raghu's line, is in the woods; it is I who like a shooting star am responsible for the whole trouble. Woe be to me, who have proved to be for my family a very fire among the bamboos and a victim of terrible agony, suffering and censure."

(1—4.)

दो०—मातु भरत के बचन मृदु सुनि पुनि उठी सँभारि ।
लिए उठाइ लगाइ उर लोचन मोचति बारि ॥ १६४ ॥

On hearing Bharata's tender words, Kausalyā rose with a renewed effort and lifting him clasped him to her bosom; while tears streamed from her eyes. (164)

चौ०—सरल सुभाय मायँ हियँ लाए । अति हित मनहुँ राम फिरि आए ॥
भेंटेउ बहुरि लखन लघु भाई । सोकु सनेहु न हृदयँ समाई ॥ १ ॥
देखि सुभाउ कहत सबु कोई । राम मातु अस काहे न होई ॥
मातौं भरतु गोद बैठारे । आँसु पोंछि मृदु बचन उचारे ॥ २ ॥

अजहुँ बच्छ बलि धीरज धरहू । कुसमउ समुझि सोक परिहरहू ॥
जनि मानहु हियँ हानि गलानी । काल करम गति अघटित जानी ॥ ३ ॥
काहुहि दोसु देहु जनि ताता । भा मोहि सब बिधि बाम बिधाता ॥
जो एतेहुँ दुख मोहि जिआवा । अजहुँ को जानइ का तेहि भावा ॥ ४ ॥

Guileless by nature, mother Kausalyā pressed him to her bosom with utmost affection as though Śrī Rāma Himself had come back. She then embraced Lakṣmaṇa's younger brother (Śatrughna); her heart was too full with grief and love. Everyone who saw her loving disposition said, "Rāma's mother that she is, no wonder she should be so loving." The mother seated Bharata in her lap and wiping away his tears spoke to him in soothing words: "I adjure you, my child, to compose yourself even now; knowing this to be an unpropitious time sorrow no more. Take not to heart the loss we have sustained and feel no remorse for it, remembering that the course of time and fate is unalterable. Do not blame anyone, my son; it is Providence that has turned hostile to me in every way. And when He makes me survive even under such trying circumstances, who knows what may be His pleasure with regard to me even now? (1—4)

दो०—पितु आयस भूषन बसन तात तजे रघुबीर ।
बिसमउ हरषु न हृदयँ कछु पहिरे बलकल चीर ॥ १६५ ॥

"At his father's command, dear child, the hero of Raghu's line discarded his ornaments and princely apparel and put on a hermit's dress (consisting of the bark of trees) without either sorrow or exultation. (165)

चौ०—मुख प्रसन्न मन रंग न रोषू । सब कर सब बिधि करि परितोषू ॥
चले बिपिन सुनि सिय सँग लागी । रहइ न राम चरन अनुरागी ॥ १ ॥
सुनतहिं लखनु चले उठि साथा । रहहिं न जतन किए रघुनाथा ॥
तब रघुपति सबही सिरु नाई । चले संग सिय अरु लघु भाई ॥ २ ॥
रामु लखनु सिय बनहि सिधाए । गइउँ न संग न प्रान पठाए ॥
यहु सबु भा इन्ह आँखिन्ह आगें । तउ न तजा तनु जीव अभागें ॥ ३ ॥
मोहि न लाज निज नेहु निहारी । राम सरिस सुत मैं महतारी ॥
जिऐ मरै भल भूपति जाना । मोर हृदय सत कुलिस समाना ॥ ४ ॥

"With a cheerful countenance, and without either joy or anger, he comforted all in every way and proceeded to the forest. Hearing this Sītā followed him and would not stay, devoted as she was to Rāma's feet. Lakṣmaṇa also, when he heard this, sprang up and accompanied them; he would not be left behind even though the Lord of Raghus tried his best to detain him. The Lord of Raghus then bowed his head to all and departed with Sītā and his younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa). So Rama, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā left for the woods, whereas I neither accompanied them nor sent my soul after them (leaving my body here). All this happened before these eyes and yet this wretched soul did not take leave of the body. I am not

ashamed of my love; to think that a son like Rāma should have a mother like me! The king knew well how to live and how to die; whereas my heart is a hundred times harder than adament." (1—4)

दो०—कौसल्या के बचन सुनि भरत सहित रनिवासु ।
ब्याकुल बिलपत राजगृह मानहुँ सोक नेवासु ॥ १६६ ॥

Hearing Kausalyā's words, Bharata and the whole gynaeceum wailed in distress; the king's palace seemed the very abode of sorrow. (166)

चौ०—बिलपहिं बिकल भरत दोउ भाई । कौसल्याँ लिए हृदयँ लगाई ॥
भाँति अनेक भरतु समुझाए । कहि बिबेकमय बचन सुनाए ॥ १ ॥
भरतहुँ मातु सकल समुझाईं । कहि पुरान श्रुति कथा सुहाईं ॥
छल बिहीन सुचि सरल सुबानी । बोले भरत जोरि जुग पानी ॥ २ ॥
जे अघ मातु पिता सुत मारें । गाइ गोठ महिसुर पुर जारें ॥
जे अघ तिय बालक बध कीन्हें । मीत महीपति माहुर दीन्हें ॥ ३ ॥
जे पातक उपपातक अहहीं । करम बचन मन भव कबि कहहीं ॥
ते पातक मोहि होहुँ बिधाता । जौं यहु होइ मोर मत माता ॥ ४ ॥

Much agitated, the two brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna, loudly lamented and Kausalyā clasped them to her bosom. She comforted Bharata in many ways and tendered words of wisdom to him. Bharata too in his turn consoled all his mothers, narrating legends from the Purāṇas and Vedas. Joining both his palms he addressed them in guileless, innocent, simple and charming words: "The sins attaching to the murder of one's mother, father or son and to the act of setting fire to a cow-pen or a village of Brahmans, and those incurred by slaying a woman or child and by administering poison to a friend or a monarch, nay, all the major and minor sins of thought, word or deed, that have been enumerated by the seers,—let all such sins be mine if, my mother, this plot has my concurrence. (1—4)

दो०—जे परिहरि हरि हर चरन भजहिं भूतगन घोर ।
तेहि कइ गति मोहि देउ बिधि जौं जननी मत मोर ॥ १६७ ॥

"May Providence award me the fate of those who forsaking the feet of Śrī Hari and Lord Śiva worship frightful ghosts, if, mother, I have complicity in this plot. (167)

चौ०—बेचहिं बेदु धरमु दुहि लेहीं । पिसुन पराय पाप कहि देहीं ॥
कपटी कुटिल कलहप्रिय क्रोधी । बेद बिदूषक बिस्व बिरोधी ॥ १ ॥
लोभी लंपट लोलुपचारा । जे ताकहिं परधनु परदारा ॥
पावौं मैं तिन्ह कै गति घोरा । जौं जननी यहु संमत मोरा ॥ २ ॥
जे नहिं साधुसंग अनुरागे । परमारथ पथ बिमुख अभागे ॥
जे न भजहिं हरि नरतनु पाई । जिन्हहि न हरि हर सुजसु सोहाई ॥ ३ ॥

तजि श्रुतिपंथु बाम पथ चलहीं । बंचक बिरचि बेष जगु छलहीं ॥
तिन्ह कै गति मोहि संकर देऊ । जननी जौं यहु जानौं भेऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"If, mother, all this has my approval, let me share the terrible fate of those who sell the Vedas, exploit their piety are given to backbiting and expose others' sins, who are deceitful, wicked, quarrelsome and irascible, who revile the Vedas and are hostile to the world, nay, who are greedy and lecherous and behave as the rapacious do, and who cast their eyes on others' wealth and others' wife. Nay, mother, if I ever knew this secret, may Lord Śiva allot me the fate of those wretches who love not the company of the virtuous, who have rejected the path leading to God-Realization, who worship not Śrī Hari even though blessed with a human form, and take no delight in the glory of Śrī Hari and Lord Śiva, who have abandoned the path of the Vedas and follow the contrary way, and who are impostors and deceive the world by assuming false appearances." (1–4)

दो०—मातु भरत के बचन सुनि साँचे सरल सुभायँ ।
कहति राम प्रिय तात तुम्ह सदा बचन मन कायँ ॥ १६८ ॥

Hearing Bharata's truthful, artless and sincere words mother **Kausalyā** said, "You, my dear child, have always loved Rāma in thought, word and deed. (168)

चौ०—राम प्रानहु तें प्रान तुम्हारे । तुम्ह रघुपतिहि प्रानहु तें प्यारे ॥
बिधु बिष चवै स्रवै हिमु आगी । होइ बारिचर बारि बिरागी ॥ १ ॥
भएँ ग्यानु बरु मिटै न मोहू । तुम्ह रामहि प्रतिकूल न होहू ॥
मत तुम्हार यहु जो जग कहहीं । सो सपनेहुँ सुख सुगति न लहहीं ॥ २ ॥
अस कहि मातु भरतु हियँ लाए । थन पय स्रवहिं नयन जल छाए ॥
करत बिलाप बहुत यहि भाँती । बैठेहिं बीति गई सब राती ॥ ३ ॥
बामदेउ बसिष्ठ तब आए । सचिव महाजन सकल बोलाए ॥
मुनि बहु भाँति भरत उपदेसे । कहि परमारथ बचन सुदेसे ॥ ४ ॥

"Rāma is dearer to you than your own life, and likewise you are dearer to the Lord of Raghus than his own life. The moon may diffuse poison (through her rays) and snow emit fire; nay, an aquatic creature may shun water and spiritual enlightenment may fail to eradicate error; but in no case will you turn hostile to Rāma. Those in this world who allege this plot was contrived with your connivance shall never attain happiness or salvation even in a dream." So saying mother Kausalya clasped Bharata to her bosom; milk began to flow from her breasts and her eyes filled with tears. In this way they squatted away the whole night lamenting in profusion. The sages Vāmadeva and Vasiṣṭha then came and summoned all the ministers and the elite of the city. Vasiṣṭha admonished Bharata in many ways speaking to him words of wisdom appropriate to the occasion. (1–4)

दो०—तात हृदयँ धीरजु धरहु करहु जो अवसर आजु ।
उठे भरत गुर बचन सुनि करन कहेउ सबु साजु ॥ १६९ ॥

"Have courage in your heart, dear son, and do what the occasion demands today." Hearing his preceptor's commands Bharata rose and asked everything to be got ready. (169)

चौ०—नृपतनु बेद बिदित अन्हवावा । परम बिचित्र बिमानु बनावा ॥
गहि पद भरत मातु सब राखी । रहीं रानि दरसन अभिलाषी ॥ १ ॥
चंदन अगर भार बहु आए । अमित अनेक सुगंध सुहाए ॥
सरजु तीर रचि चिता बनाई । जनु सुरपुर सोपान सुहाई ॥ २ ॥
एहि बिधि दाह क्रिया सब कीन्ही । बिधिवत न्हाइ तिलांजुलि दीन्ही ॥
सोधि सुमृति सब बेद पुराना । कीन्ह भरत दसगात बिधाना ॥ ३ ॥
जहँ जस मुनिबर आयसु दीन्हा । तहँ तस सहस भाँति सबु कीन्हा ॥
भए बिसुद्ध दिए सब दाना । धेनु बाजि गज बाहन नाना ॥ ४ ॥

He had the king's body washed in accordance with the Vedic rites and caused a most splendid funeral bier to be prepared for him. Clasping the feet of his mothers Bharata prevented them (from ascending the funeral pile); they all stayed behind in the hope of seeing Śrī Rāma. There arrived many loads of sandal-wood and aloes and diverse other excellent aromatic herbs of untold varieties. The pile was raised in an artistic way on the bank of the Sarayū river, and looked like a lovely ladder reaching to heaven. In this way all the rites of cremation were gone through and then the funeral party bathed with due ceremony and offered a handful of water and sesame seeds to the departed soul. After ascertaining the views of all the Smṛti texts, the Vedas and the Purāṇas Bharata performed the ceremony of Daśagātra*. Whatever orders the great sage Vasiṣṭha gave on a particular point Bharata carried out all of them in a thousand ways. He bestowed all sorts of gifts on attaining purity.† He gave away cows, horses, elephants and conveyances of various sorts,— (1—4)

दो०—सिंघासन भूषन बसन अन्न धरनि धन धाम ।
दिए भरत लहि भूमिसुर भे परिपूरन काम ॥ १७० ॥

—And even so thrones, ornaments and costumes, foodgrains, lands, money and houses; and the Brahmans had all their desires fulfilled on receiving them. (170)

चौ०—पितु हित भरत कीन्हि जसि करनी । सो मुख लाख जाइ नहिं बरनी ॥
सुदिनु सोधि मुनिबर तब आए । सचिव महाजन सकल बोलाए ॥ १ ॥
बैठे राजसभाँ सब जाई । पठए बोलि भरत दोउ भाई ॥
भरतु बसिष्ठ निकट बैठारे । नीति धरममय बचन उचारे ॥ २ ॥
प्रथम कथा सब मुनिबर बरनी । कैकइ कुटिल कीन्हि जसि करनी ॥
भूप धरमब्रतु सत्य सराहा । जेहिं तनु परिहरि प्रेमु निबाहा ॥ ३ ॥

---

*The ceremony consists in offering to the departed soul a ball of boiled rice on each of the ten days following the cremation of the deceased.

† The Hindus believe that the agnates and certain other relations of a deceased remain impure for a number of days and get purified only after the prescribed period is over.

कहत राम गुन सील सुभाऊ। सजल नयन पुलकेउ मुनिराऊ ॥
बहुरि लखन सिय प्रीति बखानी। सोक सनेह मगन मुनि ग्यानी ॥ ४ ॥

Whatever rites Bharata performed for the benefit of his father (in the other world) were more than a hundred thousand tongues could recount. Then, after determining an auspicious date the great sage (Vasiṣṭha) came and summoned all the ministers as well as the elite of the city. They all repaired to the council chamber and sat there. The two brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna, were also sent for. Vasiṣṭha seated Bharata by his side and spoke to him words full of wisdom and piety. First of all the great sage repeated the whole story of Kaikeyī's wily doing and paid his tribute to the vow of piety and truthfulness of King Daśaratha, who remained true to his love even at the cost of his life. And as the great hermit spoke of Śrī Rāma's virtues, amiability and kind disposition tears came to his eyes and a thrill ran through his body. Again, when he extolled the affection that Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā bore (towards Rāma), the enlightened sage was overwhelmed with grief and emotion. (1—4)

दो०—सुनहु भरत भावी प्रबल बिलखि कहेउ मुनिनाथ।
हानि लाभु जीवनु मरनु जसु अपजसु बिधि हाथ ॥ १७१ ॥

"Listen, Bharata: formidable is fate!" the lord of sages sorrowfully exclaimed. "Loss and gain, life and death, glory and infamy—all these lie in the hands of Providence. (171)

चौ०—अस बिचारि केहि देइअ दोसू। ब्यरथ काहि पर कीजिअ रोसू ॥
तात बिचारु करहु मन माहीं। सोच जोगु दसरथु नृपु नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
सोचिअ बिप्र जो बेद बिहीना। तजि निज धरमु बिषय लयलीना ॥
सोचिअ नृपति जो नीति न जाना। जेहि न प्रजा प्रिय प्रान समाना ॥ २ ॥
सोचिअ बयसु कृपन धनवानू। जो न अतिथि सिव भगति सुजानू ॥
सोचिअ सूद्रु बिप्र अवमानी। मुखर मानप्रिय ग्यान गुमानी ॥ ३ ॥
सोचिअ पुनि पति बंचक नारी। कुटिल कलहप्रिय इच्छाचारी ॥
सोचिअ बटु निज ब्रतु परिहरई। जो नहिं गुर आयसु अनुसरई ॥ ४ ॥

"Arguing thus, whom should we blame ? And with whom should we be angry without any cause ? Ponder in your heart, my son, that King Daśaratha is not worth grieving for. Pitiable is the Brahman who is ignorant of the Vedas, and who has abandoned his own duty and is engrossed in the pleasures of sense; pitiable the king who has no knowledge of politics and who does not love his people as his own life; pitiable the Vaiśya (a member of the trading class) who is niggardly though rich, and who is not perfect in hospitality nor in devotion to Lord Śiva; pitiable the Śūdra (a member of the labouring or artisan class) who is disrespectful towards the Brahmans, loquacious and proud of his knowledge and loves to be honoured. Pitiable, again, is the woman who deceives her own husband, is crooked and quarrelsome and follows her own will; pitiable the religious student who breaks his vow and obeys not the orders of his preceptor. (1—4)

दो०—सोचिअ गृही जो मोह बस करइ करम पथ त्याग ।
सोचिअ जती प्रपंच रत बिगत बिबेक बिराग ॥ १७२ ॥

"Nay, pitiable is the householder who out of ignorance forsakes the path of duty; and pitiable the recluse who is attached to the world and lacks discretion and dispassion. (172)

चौ०—बैखानस सोइ सोचै जोगू । तपु बिहाइ जेहि भावइ भोगू ॥
सोचिअ पिसुन अकारन क्रोधी । जननि जनक गुर बंधु बिरोधी ॥ १ ॥
सब बिधि सोचिअ पर अपकारी । निज तनु पोषक निरदय भारी ॥
सोचनीय सबहीं बिधि सोई । जो न छाड़ि छलु हरि जन होई ॥ २ ॥
सोचनीय नहिं कोसलराऊ । भुवन चारिदस प्रगट प्रभाऊ ॥
भयउ न अहइ न अब होनिहारा । भूप भरत जस पिता तुम्हारा ॥ ३ ॥
बिधि हरि हरु सुरपति दिसिनाथा । बरनहिं सब दसरथ गुन गाथा ॥ ४ ॥

"Pitiable is the anchorite who has given up penance and developed a liking for luxuries; pitiable the backbiter who is angry without cause and an enemy of his own parents, preceptor and brothers. Pitiable in every way is he who harms others, cherishes his own body and is exceedingly heartless. And pitiable in every respect is he who is not sincerely devoted to Śrī Hari. The lord of Kosala is not worth grieving for, his glory being manifest through all the fourteen spheres. There never was, nor is, nor shall be hereafter, a monarch like your father, Bharata. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Indra (the lord of celestials) and the guardians of the quarters, all sing praises of King Daśaratha. (1—4)

दो०—कहहु तात केहि भाँति कोउ करिहि बड़ाई तासु ।
राम लखन तुम्ह सत्रुहन सरिस सुअन सुचि जासु ॥ १७३ ॥

"Tell me, dear child, who can glorify him who begot such pious sons as Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Śatrughna and yourself? (173)

चौ०—सब प्रकार भूपति बड़भागी । बादि बिषादु करिअ तेहि लागी ॥
यहु सुनि समुझि सोचु परिहरहू । सिर धरि राज रजायसु करहू ॥ १ ॥
रायँ राजपदु तुम्ह कहुँ दीन्हा । पिता बचनु फुर चाहिअ कीन्हा ॥
तजे रामु जेहिं बचनहि लागी । तनु परिहरेउ राम बिरहागी ॥ २ ॥
नृपहि बचन प्रिय नहिं प्रिय प्राना । करहु तात पितु बचन प्रवाना ॥
करहु सीस धरि भूप रजाई । हइ तुम्ह कहँ सब भाँति भलाई ॥ ३ ॥
परसुराम पितु अग्या राखी । मारी मातु लोक सब साखी ॥
तनय जजातिहि जौबनु दयऊ । पितु अग्याँ अघ अजसु न भयऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"The king was blessed in every way; it is no use mourning for him. Hearing and realizing this, sorrow no more, and reverently obey the king's command. The king has bestowed the kingship on you; it behoves you,

therefore, to redeem the words of your father who abandoned Rāma for the sake of his word and quitted his body in his anguish of separation from Rāma. The king did not love his own life as he did his word; therefore, dear son, redeem your father's word. Reverently obey the king's command; this will do you good in every way. Paraśurāma executed the command of his father and killed his own mother: the whole world will bear testimony to this fact. Yayāti's son (Pūru)* exchanged his own youth for the old age of his father and incurred no sin or blame because he did so in obedience to his father's command. (1—4)

दो०—अनुचित उचित बिचारु तजि जे पालहिं पितु बैन ।
ते भाजन सुख सुजस के बसहिं अमरपति ऐन ॥ १७४ ॥

"Those who cherish their father's word, minding not whether it is reasonable or otherwise, attain happiness and fair renown and dwell in the abode of Indra (the lord of immortals). (174)

चौ०—अवसि नरेस बचन फुर करहू । पालहु प्रजा सोकु परिहरहू ॥
सुरपुर नृपु पाइहि परितोषू । तुम्ह कहुँ सुकृतु सुजसु नहिं दोषू ॥ १ ॥
बेद बिदित संमत सबही का । जेहि पितु देइ सो पावइ टीका ॥
करहु राजु परिहरहु गलानी । मानहु मोर बचन हित जानी ॥ २ ॥
सुनि सुखु लहब राम बैदेहीं । अनुचित कहब न पंडित केहीं ॥
कौसल्यादि सकल महतारीं । तेउ प्रजा सुख होहिं सुखारीं ॥ ३ ॥
परम तुम्हार राम कर जानिहि । सो सब बिधि तुम्ह सन भल मानिहि ॥
सौंपेहु राजु राम के आएँ । सेवा करेहु सनेह सुहाएँ ॥ ४ ॥

"Therefore, you needs must redeem the king's word; cherish your subjects and cease to grieve. The king in heaven will derive solace, while you will earn merit and good fame and shall incur no blame. It is well known in the Vedas and has the sanction of all that the crown goes to him on whom the father bestows it. Therefore, rule the kingdom, feel no remorse and accept

---

*King Yayāti had won the hand of Devayānī, daughter of Śukrāchārya (preceptor of the demon kings). Devayānī having once complained to her father of the king's infidelity, Śukrāchārya pronounced on him a curse as a result of which he became old and infirm before time. Having been propitiated by him through supplication and entreaty, however, the sage allowed the king to borrow the youth of another in exchange for his own old age should anyone be willing to part with it. The king thereupon sought the help of his sons, but the first four of them declined. It was only the fifth and youngest son, Pūru, who willingly parted with his own youth and accepted the old age of his father. After enjoying life for a few more years Yayāti got disgusted with the world and retired to the woods, returning the youth of his youngest son and crowning him king in preference to his elder brothers, who had all disappointed him. Even though Yayāti had made use of his son's youth in enjoying life with his mother, the son incurred no sin because he had agreed to this arrangement only to please his father and made a unique sacrifice for his sake.

my advice as salutary. Rāma and Videha's daughter (Sītā) will be gratified when they hear of it and no wise man will call it wrong. Kausalyā and all the other mothers too will be happy in the happiness of the people. Nay, he who will know the supreme affinity between you and Rāma will have perfect goodwill towards you. When Rāma returns home you may hand over the kingdom to him and serve him with ideal affection." (1—4)

दो०—कीजिअ गुर आयसु अवसि कहहिं सचिव कर जोरि ।
रघुपति आएँ उचित जस तस तब करब बहोरि ॥ १७५ ॥

The ministers submitted with joined palms: "You needs must obey the order of your preceptor. When the Lord of Raghus comes back, you may do what you think fit then." (175)

चौ०—कौसल्या धरि धीरजु कहई । पूत पथ्य गुर आयसु अहई ॥
सो आदरिअ करिअ हित मानी । तजिअ बिषादु काल गति जानी ॥ १ ॥
बन रघुपति सुरपति नरनाहू । तुम्ह एहि भाँति तात कदराहू ॥
परिजन प्रजा सचिव सब अंबा । तुम्हही सुत सब कहँ अवलंबा ॥ २ ॥
लखि बिधि बाम कालु कठिनाई । धीरजु धरहु मातु बलि जाई ॥
सिर धरि गुर आयसु अनुसरहू । प्रजा पालि परिजन दुख हरहू ॥ ३ ॥
गुर के बचन सचिव अभिनंदनु । सुने भरत हिय हित जनु चंदनु ॥
सुनी बहोरि मातु मृदु बानी । सील सनेह सरल रस सानी ॥ ४ ॥

Summoning courage Kausalyā said, "Salutary, my son, is your Guru's command; the same should be respected and obeyed by you as conducive to your good. Cease to grieve realizing the vicissitudes of life. The Lord of Raghus is in the forest and the king is lording it over the gods (in heaven); while you, my son, are thus giving way to faint-heartedness. You, my child, are the only support of all including your family, subjects, ministers and all your mothers. Perceiving the antipathy of God and the relentlessness of fate, I adjure you by my life to have courage. Reverently obey your Guru's command, cherish your subjects and relieve the affliction of your family." Bharata listened to the advice of his preceptor and the ministers' appeal endorsing the same, which were as soothing to his heart as sandal-paste. He further heard the mother's soft words imbued with the nectar of amiability, affection and guilelessness. (1—4)

छं०—सानी सरल रस मातु बानी सुनि भरतु ब्याकुल भए ।
लोचन सरोरुह स्रवत सींचत बिरह उर अंकुर नए ॥
सो दसा देखत समय तेहि बिसरी सबहि सुधि देह की ।
तुलसी सराहत सकल सादर सीवँ सहज सनेह की ॥

Bharata grew restless when he heard mother Kausalyā's speech imbued as it was with the nectar of sincerity. His lotus eyes shed tears that watered the

fresh shoots of desolation in his heart. All those who saw his condition at that time forgot their own existence. Everyone, says Tulasīdāsa, reverently extolled him as the perfection of artless love.

सो०—भरतु कमल कर जोरि धीर धुरंधर धीर धरि।
बचन अमिअँ जनु बोरि देत उचित उत्तर सबहि ॥ १७६ ॥

Joining his lotus palms, Bharata, who was foremost among the strong-minded, took courage and proceeded to give fitting replies to all in words steeped as it were in nectar. (176)

[PAUSE 18 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—मोहि उपदेसु दीन्ह गुर नीका। प्रजा सचिव संमत सबही का ॥
मातु उचित धरि आयसु दीन्हा। अवसि सीस धरि चाहउँ कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
गुर पितु मातु स्वामि हित बानी। सुनि मन मुदित करिअ भलि जानी ॥
उचित कि अनुचित किएँ बिचारू। धरमु जाइ सिर पातक भारू ॥ २ ॥
तुम्ह तौ देहु सरल सिख सोई। जो आचरत मोर भल होई ॥
जद्यपि यह समुझत हउँ नीकें। तदपि होत परितोषु न जी कें ॥ ३ ॥
अब तुम्ह बिनय मोरि सुनि लेहू। मोहि अनुहरत सिखावनु देहू ॥
ऊतरु देउँ छमब अपराधू। दुखित दोष गुन गनहिं न साधू ॥ ४ ॥

"My preceptor has given me excellent advice, which has been endorsed by my subjects, ministers and all. Mother (Kausalyā) too has enjoined on me what she has thought fit and which I certainly wish to carry out with reverence. The advice of one's preceptor, parents, master and friend ought to be acted upon with a cheerful heart as conducive to one's good. By pausing to think whether it is right or wrong one fails in one's duty and incurs a load of sin. You are surely giving me sincere advice which, if followed, will do me good. Even though I fully realize this, my heart is not satisfied. Now hear my request and give me advice that may suit me Forgive me my presumption in returning an answer to you; for good people reckon not the virtues or faults of the distressed. (1—4)

दो०—पितु सुरपुर सिय रामु बन करन कहहु मोहि राजु।
एहि तें जानहु मोर हित कै आपन बड़ काजु ॥ १७७ ॥

"My father is in heaven and both Sītā and Rāma are in the woods, whereas you ask me to rule the kingdom. Do you think this will do me good or you expect some unusual gain to yourself from this arrangement? (177)

चौ०—हित हमार सियपति सेवकाईं। सो हरि लीन्ह मातु कुटिलाईं ॥
मैं अनुमानि दीख मन माहीं। आन उपायँ मोर हित नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
सोक समाजु राजु केहि लेखें। लखन राम सिय बिनु पद देखें ॥
बादि बसन बिनु भूषन भारू। बादि बिरति बिनु ब्रह्मबिचारू ॥ २ ॥

सरुज सरीर बादि बहु भोगा । बिनु हरिभगति जायँ जप जोगा ॥
जायँ जीव बिनु देह सुहाई । बादि मोर सबु बिनु रघुराई ॥ ३ ॥
जाउँ राम पहिं आयसु देहू । एकहिं आँक मोर हित एहू ॥
मोहि नृप करि भल आपन चहहू । सोउ सनेह जड़ता बस कहहू ॥ ४ ॥

"My good lies in the service of Śrī Rama, although I have been deprived of that privilege through my mother's perversity. I have pondered in my heart and realized that my good lies in no other way. Of what account is this kingdom, which is nothing but an abode of sorrow, when the feet of Laksmana, Rama and Sita are no longer to be seen? A load of jewels is of no use without clothes; an enquiry about Brahma (the Absolute) is of little use without dispassion; abundant enjoyments are of no use to a diseased body; of little use are Japa (muttering of prayers) and Yoga (exercises of mind-control) without devotion to Śrī Hari. A handsome body is of no use without life and all I have is naught without the Lord of Raghus. Grant me leave to go where Rama is; my good exclusively lies in this. And if you urge that you seek your own good by crowning me king, you say so only through ignorance caused by affection. (1—4)

दो०—कैकेई सुअ कुटिलमति राम बिमुख गतलाज ।
तुम्ह चाहत सुखु मोहबस मोहि से अधम कें राज ॥ १७८ ॥

"It is through infatuation that you expect happiness from the reign of a wretch like me, who is Kaikeyī's son, of perverted intellect, hostile to Rāma and lost to shame. (178)

चौ०—कहउँ साँचु सब सुनि पतिआहू । चाहिअ धरमसील नरनाहू ॥
मोहि राजु हठि देइहहु जबहीं । रसा रसातल जाइहि तबहीं ॥ १ ॥
मोहि समान को पाप निवासू । जेहि लगि सीय राम बनबासू ॥
रायँ राम कहुँ काननु दीन्हा । बिछुरत गमनु अमरपुर कीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
मैं सठु सब अनरथ कर हेतू । बैठ बात सब सुनउँ सचेतू ॥
बिनु रघुबीर बिलोकि अबासू । रहे प्रान सहि जग उपहासू ॥ ३ ॥
राम पुनीत बिषय रस रूखे । लोलुप भूमि भोग के भूखे ॥
कहँ लगि कहौं हृदय कठिनाई । निदरि कुलिसु जेहिं लही बड़ाई ॥ ४ ॥

"I tell you the truth: you should all listen and believe what I say A virtuous man alone should be crowned as king The moment you instal me on the throne perforce the earth will sink into the lowest depths. Who is such an inveterate sinner as I, on whose account Sita and Rāma have been exiled into the forest? The king sent Rāma into exile and himself ascended to heaven the moment the latter left him My wretched self, which is the root of all evil, is sitting quietly and hears all talk unmoved. Even though I find the palace without Rama, I have survived and endured the world's jeers. Devoid of attraction for Śrī Rāma, who is a sacred object of love, my soul is rapacious and hungers for land (dominion) and enjoyment. I have no words

to depict the cruelty of my heart that has attained notoriety by surpassing even adamant. (1—4)

दो०—कारन तें कारजु कठिन होइ दोसु नहिं मोर।
कुलिस अस्थि तें उपल तें लोह कराल कठोर ॥ १७९ ॥

"An effect is as a rule harder than its cause; and I am not to blame for it. The thunderbolt * is more formidable and harder than bone (of which it was made) and iron than rock (from which it is quarried). (179)

चौ०—कैकेई भव तनु अनुरागे। पावँर प्रान अघाइ अभागे ॥
जौं प्रिय बिरहँ प्रान प्रिय लागे। देखब सुनब बहुत अब आगे ॥ १ ॥
लखन राम सिय कहुँ बनु दीन्हा। पठइ अमरपुर पति हित कीन्हा ॥
लीन्ह बिधवपन अपजसु आपू। दीन्हेउ प्रजहि सोकु संतापू ॥ २ ॥
मोहि दीन्ह सुखु सुजसु सुराजू। कीन्ह कैकईं सब कर काजू ॥
एहि तें मोर काह अब नीका। तेहि पर देन कहहु तुम्ह टीका ॥ ३ ॥
कैकइ जठर जनमि जग माहीं। यह मोहि कहँ कछु अनुचित नाहीं ॥
मोरि बात सब बिधिहिं बनाई। प्रजा पाँच कत करहु सहाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Clinging to this body born of Kaikeyī, my wretched life is exceedingly unfortunate. When life has been dear to me even though I have been torn from my beloved brother, I shall have much to see and hear yet. Kaikeyī has sent Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma and Sītā into exile and has done a good turn to her husband by despatching him to the abode of immortals; she has taken widowhood and infamy upon herself and bestowed grief and affliction on the people; and to me she has allotted happiness, good reputation and a thriving kingdom; in this way she has served the interests of all. I cannot expect greater good than this at present; over and above that you proclaim your intention to crown me king. Since I have been born into this world through Kaikeyī's womb this is not at all unbecoming of me. God Himself has accomplished everything for me; why, then, should you all as well as the people help my cause? (1—4)

दो०—ग्रह ग्रहीत पुनि बात बस तेहि पुनि बीछी मार।
तेहि पिआइअ बारुनी कहहु काह उपचार ॥ १८० ॥

"If a man who is possessed by some evil spirit and is also affected by delirium and has been further stung by a scorpion is given a cup of wine, tell me, what kind of treatment is this? (180)

चौ०—कैकइ सुअन जोगु जग जोई। चतुर बिरंचि दीन्ह मोहि सोई ॥
दसरथ तनय राम लघु भाई। दीन्हि मोहि बिधि बादि बड़ाई ॥ १ ॥

* The story as to how the thunderbolt was made out of the bones of the philanthropic sage Dadhichi (who gave up his life in the interest of the gods) has been told in the account of this sage, which appears in the footnote below the Chaupais following Doha 29 above.

तुम्ह सब कहहु कढ़ावन टीका । राय रजायसु सब कहँ नीका ॥
उतरु देउँ केहि बिधि केहि केही । कहहु सुखेन जथा रुचि जेही ॥ २ ॥
मोहि कुमातु समेत बिहाई । कहहु कहिहि के कीन्ह भलाई ॥
मो बिनु को सचराचर माहीं । जेहि सिय रामु प्रानप्रिय नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
परम हानि सब कहँ बड़ लाहू । अदिनु मोर नहिं दूषन काहू ॥
संसय सील प्रेम बस अहहू । सबुइ उचित सब जो कछु कहहू ॥ ४ ॥

"God in His wisdom has ordained for me everything in this world that is worthy of Kaikeyī's son. He has, however, bestowed on me in vain the honour of being a son of King Daśaratha and a younger brother of Śrī Rāma. All of you urge me to accept the throne and the king's command is good for all. How shall I answer all individually? Let everyone gladly say what one pleases. Barring me and my vile mother, tell me, who will say the right thing has been done? Excepting myself who is there in the whole animate and inanimate creation that does not love Sītā and Rāma as one's own life? What is most baneful appears to you all as a mighty gain; this is my misfortune and none is to be blamed for it. You are in the grip of doubt, amiability and affection; and whatever you all say is right. (1–4)

दो०—राम मातु सुठि सरलचित मो पर प्रेमु बिसेषि ।
कहइ सुभाय सनेह बस मोरि दीनता देखि ॥ १८१ ॥

"Śrī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) is most guileless of heart and loves me in a special degree. Finding me in distress she has said all this under impulse of natural affection. (181)

चौ०—गुर बिबेक सागर जगु जाना । जिन्हहि बिस्व कर बदर समाना ॥
मो कहँ तिलक साज सज सोऊ । भएँ बिधि बिमुख बिमुख सबु कोऊ ॥ १ ॥
परिहरि रामु सीय जग माहीं । कोउ न कहिहि मोर मत नाहीं ॥
सो मैं सुनब सहब सुखु मानी । अंतहुँ कीच तहाँ जहँ पानी ॥ २ ॥
डरु न मोहि जग कहिहि कि पोचू । परलोकहु कर नाहिन सोचू ॥
एकइ उर बस दुसह दवारी । मोहि लगि भे सिय रामु दुखारी ॥ ३ ॥
जीवन लाहु लखन भल पावा । सबु तजि राम चरन मनु लावा ॥
मोर जनम रघुबर बन लागी । झूठ काह पछिताउँ अभागी ॥ ४ ॥

"My Guru (Vasiṣṭha) as all the world knows is an ocean of wisdom; the universe is like a plum in the palm of his hand*. Even he is making preparations for my coronation; when Fate is adverse, everyone else turns hostile. With the exception of Śrī Rāma and Sītā no one in this world will say the plot did not have my approval. All this I must hear and endure with a cheerful heart; for wherever there is water mud must be there eventually. I shudder not to think that the world will call me vile; and I have little anxiety about the other world either. There is one terrible anguish that plagues my heart; it is that Sītā and Rāma are suffering hardships on my

* It is an idiomatic way of saying that the secrets of the world are intimately known to him.

account. Lakṣmaṇa has fully reaped the reward of his existence; discarding everything else he has fixed his mind on Śrī Rāma's feet. As for myself I was born for Śrī Rāma's banishment; in vain do I lament, wretched that I am. (1–4)

दो०—आपनि दारुन दीनता कहउँ सबहि सिरु नाइ ।
देखें बिनु रघुनाथ पद जिय कै जरनि न जाइ ॥ १८२ ॥

"Bowing my head to all I lay open my terrible distress before you. Unless I behold Śrī Rāma's feet the agony of my soul shall not go. (182)

चौ०—आन उपाउ मोहि नहिं सूझा । को जिय कै रघुबर बिनु बूझा ॥
एकहिं आँक इहइ मन माहीं । प्रातकाल चलिहउँ प्रभु पाहीं ॥ १ ॥
जद्यपि मैं अनभल अपराधी । भै मोहि कारन सकल उपाधी ॥
तदपि सरन सनमुख मोहि देखी । छमि सब करिहहिं कृपा बिसेषी ॥ २ ॥
सील सकुच सुठि सरल सुभाऊ । कृपा सनेह सदन रघुराऊ ॥
अरिहुक अनभल कीन्ह न रामा । मैं सिसु सेवक जद्यपि बामा ॥ ३ ॥
तुम्ह पै पाँच मोर भल मानी । आयसु आसिष देहु सुबानी ॥
जेहिं सुनि बिनय मोहि जनु जानी । आवहिं बहुरि रामु रजधानी ॥ ४ ॥

"I find no other remedy. Who else than the Chief of Raghus can know what passes in my heart? There is only one resolve in my mind: at daybreak I must proceed to meet the Lord. Even though I am a vile offender and am at the root of all troubles, yet when the Lord finds me before him in a suppliant mien he will forgive all my faults and shower his special grace on me. The Lord of Raghus is an embodiment of amiability, meekness, extreme guilelessness of disposition, compassion and love. Śrī Rāma has never injured even an enemy, to say nothing of me, a mere child and his servant too, though hostile to him. Therefore, do allow me, all of you, to depart and bless me in an auspicious strain knowing it to be for my good, so that on hearing my supplication and recognizing me as his servant Śrī Rāma may return to his capital. (1–4)

दो०—जद्यपि जनमु कुमातु तें मैं सठु सदा सदोस ।
आपन जानि न त्यागिहहिं मोहि रघुबीर भरोस ॥ १८३ ॥

"Though I am born of a wicked mother and am myself a rogue and ever guilty, I am confident of Rāma that he will never forsake me knowing me for his own." (183)

चौ०—भरत बचन सब कहँ प्रिय लागे । राम सनेह सुधाँ जनु पागे ॥
लोग बियोग बिषम बिष दागे । मंत्र सबीज सुनत जनु जागे ॥ १ ॥
मातु सचिव गुर पुर नर नारी । सकल सनेहँ बिकल भए भारी ॥
भरतहि कहहिं सराहि सराही । राम प्रेम मूरति तनु आही ॥ २ ॥

तात भरत अस काहे न कहहू । प्रान समान राम प्रिय अहहू ॥
जो पावँरु अपनी जड़ताईं । तुम्हहि सुगाइ मातु कुटिलाईं ॥ ३ ॥
सो सठु कोटिक पुरुष समेता । बसिहि कलप सत नरक निकेता ॥
अहि अघ अवगुन नहिं मनि गहई । हरइ गरल दुख दारिद दहई ॥ ४ ॥

Bharata's words pleased all, imbued as they were with the nectar of devo tion to Śrī Rāma. The people who had been burning with the deadly poison of separation from Śrī Rama were roused to their senses on hearing as it were a charm against snake poison along with its seed-letter* The mothers, the ministers, the preceptor and the people of the city, all were overwhelmed with emotion. They praised Bharata again and again and said, "Your body is the very personification of affection for Śrī Rāma. It is no wonder that you should say so, dear Bharata, since you are dear to Rāma as his own life. The vile man who through his ignorance hates you because of your mother's perversity, the wretch shall abide in hell for a hundred Kalpas (cycles) with millions of his past generations. A gem on the head of a serpent is not affected by the sins and faults of the serpent; on the other hand, it counteracts poison, sorrow and indigence. (1—4)

दो०—अवसि चलिअ बन रामु जहँ भरत मंत्रु भल कीन्ह ।
सोक सिंधु बूड़त सबहि तुम्ह अवलंबनु दीन्ह ॥ १८४ ॥

"Bharata, you have thought out a good plan; by all means let us proceed to the woods where Śrī Rāma is. You have held out a helping hand to us all while we were being drowned in an ocean of grief." (184)

चौ०—भा सब कें मन मोदु न थोरा । जनु घन धुनि सुनि चातक मोरा ॥
चलत प्रात लखि निरनउ नीके । भरतु प्रानप्रिय भे सबही के ॥ १ ॥
मुनिहि बंदि भरतहि सिरु नाई । चले सकल घर बिदा कराई ॥
धन्य भरत जीवनु जग माहीं । सीलु सनेहु सराहत जाहीं ॥ २ ॥
कहहिं परसपर भा बड़ काजू । सकल चलै कर साजहिं साजू ॥
जेहि राखहिं रहु घर रखवारी । सो जानइ जनु गरदनि मारी ॥ ३ ॥
कोउ कह रहन कहिअ नहिं काहू । को न चहइ जग जीवन लाहू ॥ ४ ॥

Everyone felt as great a joy as when the Chataka birds and peacocks hear a clap of thunder. When the people came to know Bharata's welcome resolve to start the very next morning, they all began to love him as their own life. After reverencing the sage and bowing their head to Bharata they

* According to the Tantras (a sacred literature dealing with the worship of deities) there are mystic formulas sacred to every deity, which if repeated with genuine faith and in accordance with certain prescribed rules help the realization of that deity. Every such Mantra has also got a Bija-Mantra consisting of a single letter with 'm' added to it. This seed-letter, if prefixed to the Mantra itself, enhances its potency.

all took leave and proceeded to their respective homes praising as they went his amiability and affection and exclaiming, "Blessed is Bharata's life in this world!" They said to one another, "A great object has been accomplished!" Everyone began to make preparations for the journey. Whomsoever they left behind saying "You should stay behind to guard the house," felt as if he was smitten on the neck. Someone said, "Nobody should be asked to remain behind; who in this world would not have the reward of his life? (1—4)

दो०—जरउ सो संपति सदन सुखु सुहृद मातु पितु भाइ।
सनमुख होत जो राम पद करै न सहस सहाइ॥ १८५॥

"Perish that property, house, happiness, friend, father, mother or brother, who does not gladly help one turn one's face towards Srī Rāma's feet!" (185)

चौ०—घर घर साजहिं बाहन नाना। हरषु हृदयँ परभात पयाना॥
भरत जाइ घर कीन्ह बिचारू। नगरु बाजि गज भवन भँडारू॥ १॥
संपति सब रघुपति कै आही। जौं बिनु जतन चलौं तजि ताही॥
तौ परिनाम न मोरि भलाई। पाप सिरोमनि साइँ दोहाई॥ २॥
करइ स्वामि हित सेवकु सोई। दूषन कोटि देइ किन कोई॥
अस बिचारि सुचि सेवक बोले। जे सपनेहुँ निज धरम न डोले॥ ३॥
कहि सबु मरमु धरमु भल भाषा। जो जेहि लायक सो तेहिं राखा॥
करि सबु जतनु राखि रखवारे। राम मातु पहिं भरतु सिधारे॥ ४॥

In every house they got ready vehicles of various kinds; their soul rejoiced at the thought of starting early next morning. On reaching his own apartments Bharata thought to himself: "The city, horses, elephants, houses and the treasury,—everything belongs to the Lord of Raghus. If I leave it unprotected, the result will not be good for me; for disloyalty to one's master is the greatest of all sins. A servant is he who serves the interests of his master, no matter if anyone brings millions of imputations against him." Pondering thus he summoned faithful servants who had never dreamt of flinching from their duty. Confiding to them all the secrets he taught them their paramount duty and entrusted them with the work for which they were severally fit. After making all arrangements and posting guards Bharata went to Srī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā). (1—4)

दो०—आरत जननी जानि सब भरत सनेह सुजान।
कहेउ बनावन पालकीं सजन सुखासन जान॥ १८६॥

Knowing all the mothers in distress, Bharata, who understood the ways of love, ordered palanquins to be got ready and sedan-chairs to be equipped. (186)

चौ०—चक्क चक्कि जिमि पुर नर नारी। चहत प्रात उर आरत भारी॥
जागत सब निसि भयउ बिहाना। भरत बोलाए सचिव सुजाना॥ १॥

कहेउ लेहु सबु तिलक समाजू । बनहिं देब मुनि रामहि राजू ॥
बेगि चलहु सुनि सचिव जोहारे । तुरत तुरग रथ नाग सँवारे ॥ २ ॥
अरुंधती अरु अगिनि समाऊ । रथ चढ़ि चले प्रथम मुनिराऊ ॥
बिप्र बृंद चढ़ि बाहन नाना । चले सकल तप तेज निधाना ॥ ३ ॥
नगर लोग सब सजि सजि जाना । चित्रकूट कहँ कीन्ह पयाना ॥
सिबिका सुभग न जाहिं बखानी । चढ़ि चढ़ि चलत भईं सब रानी ॥ ४ ॥

Much afflicted at heart like the male and female Chakrawāka birds, the men and women of the city longed for the dawn. They kept awake the whole night till it was daybreak, when Bharata summoned his wise counsellors and said to them, "Take all that is necessary for the installation ceremony; the sage (Vasiṣṭha) will crown Śrī Rāma even in the forest. Start expeditiously." Hearing this the ministers greeted him and had the horses, chariots and elephants immediately equipped. Taking with him his wife, Arundhatī, and the requisites for Agnihotra* (offering oblations into the sacred fire) the chief of sages, Vasiṣṭha, was the first to mount the chariot and led the way. Hosts of Brahmans, who were all repositories of austerity and spiritual glow followed in vehicles of various kinds. The people of the city followed next; having equipped their own conveyances they all left for Chitrakūṭa. All the queens journeyed in palanquins which were lovely beyond words. (1—4)

दो०—सौंपि नगर सुचि सेवकनि सादर सकल चलाइ ।
सुमिरि राम सिय चरन तब चले भरत दोउ भाइ ॥ १८७ ॥

Leaving the city in the charge of faithful servants and respectfully sending the whole party ahead, the two brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna, started last of all, remembering the feet of Śrī Rāma and Sītā. (187)

चौ०—राम दरस बस सब नर नारी । जनु करि करिनि चले तकि बारी ॥
बन सिय रामु समुझि मन माहीं । सानुज भरत पयादेहिं जाहीं ॥ १ ॥
देखि सनेहु लोग अनुरागे । उतरि चले हय गय रथ त्यागे ॥
जाइ समीप राखि निज डोली । राम मातु मृदु बानी बोली ॥ २ ॥
तात चढ़हु रथ बलि महतारी । होइहि प्रिय परिवारु दुखारी ॥
तुम्हरें चलत चलिहि सबु लोगू । सकल सोक कृस नहिं मग जोगू ॥ ३ ॥
सिर धरि बचन चरन सिरु नाई । रथ चढ़ि चलत भए दोउ भाई ॥
तमसा प्रथम दिवस करि बासू । दूसर गोमति तीर निवासू ॥ ४ ॥

Seized with a longing for the sight of Śrī Rāma, all the people, including both men and women, headed with the same zeal as male and female elephants rush in pursuit of water. Realizing in their heart that Sītā and Rāma were in the woods Bharata and his younger brother journeyed on foot. Seeing their

* In ancient times, as a general rule, every Brahman maintained the sacred fire and kept it perpetually alive till his death, when he was cremated with the same fire. He carried it with him wherever he went and poured oblations into it every morning and evening.

affection the people were overcome with emotion and dismounting walked on foot, leaving their horses, elephants and chariots. Going up to Bharata Śrī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) stopped her palanquin by his side and spoke in soft accents, "I adjure you by my life to mount the chariot, dear child; or else all our near and dear ones will be put to trouble. If you walk on foot the whole party will follow suit and you know they are all wasted with sorrow and hardly fit to undertake the journey on foot." Reverently obeying her command and bowing their head at her feet the two brothers mounted their chariot and proceeded on the journey. They halted the first day on the bank of the Tamasā* river and made the next halt on the bank of the Gomatī. (1–4)

दो०—पय अहार फल असन एक निसि भोजन एक लोग ।
करत राम हित नेम ब्रत परिहरि भूषन भोग ॥ १८८ ॥

Some of them lived on milk and some on fruits; while others took their meals by night. Renouncing ornaments and luxuries they observed vows and fasts for the sake of Śrī Rāma. (188)

चौ०—सई तीर बसि चले बिहाने । सृंगबेरपुर सब निअराने ॥
समाचार सब सुने निषादा । हृदयँ बिचार करइ सबिषादा ॥ १ ॥
कारन कवन भरतु बन जाहीं । है कछु कपट भाउ मन माहीं ॥
जौं पै जियँ न होति कुटिलाई । तौ कत लीन्ह संग कटकाई ॥ २ ॥
जानहिं सानुज रामहि मारी । करउँ अकंटक राजु सुखारी ॥
भरत न राजनीति उर आनी । तब कलंकु अब जीवन हानी ॥ ३ ॥
सकल सुरासुर जुरहिं जुझारा । रामहि समर न जीतनिहारा ॥
का आचरजु भरतु अस करहीं । नहिं बिष बेलि अमिअ फल फरहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Halting on the bank of the Saī† river they resumed their journey at daybreak and the whole party drew near to Śṛṅgaverapura‡ When the Niṣāda chief (Guha) heard the whole story, he anxiously thought within himself: "What motive can Bharata have in journeying to the woods? He must have some evil design at heart. If he had no mischievous intention at heart, why should he have brought an army with him? He must have thought that after killing Rāma and his younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) he would reign peacefully and happily. But Bharata did not take to heart the maxims of sound polity; latterly he brought on himself stigma alone but this time he will meet a sure death. If all the warriors among the gods and demons

* The Tamasā (now popularly known by the name of Tons) is a branch of the Ghagra which leaves that river about 10 miles from Ayodhyā and after flowing past the town of Azamgarh falls into the Sarayū.

† The Saī rises about midway between the Gomatī and the Gaṅgā and falls into the former 10 miles below the city of Jaunpur.

‡ The site of the ancient Śṛṅgaverapura is marked by a village bearing the same name under the modernized form 'Singraur' 22 miles to the north-west of Allahabad. The Gaṅgā has changed its course and only a small branch now flows through the old channel.

combine against Śrī Rama, even they will fail to conquer him in battle. But what wonder that Bharata should behave as he is doing; for venomous plants, after all, can never bear fruits of ambrosia." (1--4)

दो०—अस बिचारि गुहँ ग्याति सन कहेउ सजग सब होहु ।
हथवाँसहु बोरहु तरनि कीजिअ घाटारोहु ॥ १८९ ॥

Pondering thus Guha said to his kinsmen, "Be alert all of you; collect the boats and sink them and blockade the ghats (flight of steps leading to the river landing-place). (189)

चौ०—होहु सँजोइल रोकहु घाटा । ठाटहु सकल मरै के ठाटा ॥
सनमुख लोह भरत सन लेऊँ । जिअत न सुरसरि उतरन देऊँ ॥ १ ॥
समर मरनु पुनि सुरसरि तीरा । राम काजु छनभंगु सरीरा ॥
भरत भाइ नृपु मैं जन नीचू । बड़ें भाग असि पाइअ मीचू ॥ २ ॥
स्वामि काज करिहउँ रन रारी । जस धवलिहउँ भुवन दस चारी ॥
तजउँ प्रान रघुनाथ निहोरें । दुहूँ हाथ मुद मोदक मोरें ॥ ३ ॥
साधु समाज न जाकर लेखा । राम भगत महुँ जासु न रेखा ॥
जायँ जिअत जग सो महि भारू । जननी जौबन बिटप कुठारू ॥ ४ ॥

"Equip yourself and blockade the ghats; be prepared in every way to face death. I go to encounter Bharata in open combat and would not let him cross the Gangā so long as there is life in me. To die in battle and that too on the bank of the Ganga; and to lay down this frail body in Śrī Rāma's cause! Then Bharata is Śrī Rāma's own brother and a king; while I am an humble servant! It is through a great good fortune that one meets with a death like this. In the cause of my master I will fight on the battle-field and will brighten the fourteen spheres with my glory. I am going to lay down my life for the sake of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Raghus) and will be a gainer either way. (If I win the battle I will have served the cause of my master; and if I die I will attain the eternal abode of the Lord and his constant service). He who is not reckoned among the virtuous and is neither counted among Śrī Rama's devotees lives in vain in this world; he is a veritable burden to the earth and an axe to the tree of his mother's youth." (1–4)

दो०—बिगत बिषाद निषादपति सबहि बढ़ाइ उछाहु ।
सुमिरि राम मागेउ तुरत तरकस धनुष सनाहु ॥ १९० ॥

The Niṣāda chief, who was not the least troubled at heart, encouraged all and, fixing his thoughts on Śrī Rama, forthwith demanded his quiver, bow and coat of mail. (190)

चौ०—बेगहु भाइहु सजहु सँजोऊ । सुनि रजाइ कदराइ न कोऊ ॥
भलेहिं नाथ सब कहहिं सहरषा । एकहिं एक बढ़ावइ करषा ॥ १ ॥

चले निषाद जोहारि जोहारी । सूर सकल रन रूचइ रारी ॥
सुमिरि राम पद पंकज पनहीं । माथीं बाँधि चढ़ाइन्हि धनहीं ॥ २ ॥
अँगरी पहिरि कूँड़ि सिर धरहीं । फरसा बाँस सेल सम करहीं ॥
एक कुसल अति ओड़न खाँड़े । कूदहिं गगन मनहुँ छिति छाँड़े ॥ ३ ॥
निज निज साजु समाजु बनाई । गुह राउतहि जोहारे जाई ॥
देखि सुभट सब लायक जाने । लै लै नाम सकल सनमाने ॥ ४ ॥

"Make haste, brethren, to get ready the necessary equipment; on hearing my command, let no one shrink in fear." "All right, my lord," they all joyfully responded, and roused the spirit of one another. Greeting their chief one after another, the Niṣādas left; they were all brave and loved to fight on the battle-field. Invoking the shoes of Śrī Rāma's lotus feet they fastened their quiver and strung their bow. Nay, they donned their coat of mail, placed the helmet on their head and straightened their axe, bludgeon and spear. Some of them who were exceptionally clever at fencing, sprang with such agility that it seemed they never touched the ground and moved in the air. Equipping themselves with their weapons etc. and forming themselves into batches they all went up to their chief, Guha, and greeted him. Seeing his gallant warriors and finding them all fit for active service he addressed them, each by his name, and duly honoured them. (1—4)

दो०—भाइहु लावहु धोख जनि आजु काज बड़ मोहि ।
सुनि सरोष बोले सुभट बीर अधीर न होहि ॥ १९१ ॥

"Spare not your life, brethren; there is a great issue before me today." At this the gallant warriors spiritedly exclaimed, "Have patience, our brave chieftain ! (191)

चौ०—राम प्रताप नाथ बल तोरे । करहिं कटकु बिनु भट बिनु घोरे ॥
जीवत पाउ न पाछें धरहीं । रुंड मुंडमय मेदिनि करहीं ॥ १ ॥
दीख निषादनाथ भल टोलू । कहेउ बजाउ जुझाऊ ढोलू ॥
एतना कहत छींक भइ बाँए । कहेउ सगुनिअन्ह खेत सुहाए ॥ २ ॥
बूढ़ु एकु कह सगुन बिचारी । भरतहि मिलिअ न होइहि रारी ॥
रामहि भरतु मनावन जाहीं । सगुन कहइ अस बिग्रहु नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि गुह कहइ नीक कह बूढ़ा । सहसा करि पछिताहिं बिमूढ़ा ॥
भरत सुभाउ सीलु बिनु बूझें । बड़ि हित हानि जानि बिनु जूझें ॥ ४ ॥

"Through the majesty of Śrī Rāma and by your might, my lord, we shall leave no fighting man or horse in the enemy's ranks. We shall never retrace our steps so long as there is life in us; nay, we shall strew the earth with the trunks and heads of fallen warriors !" The Niṣāda chief saw that he had a good band of warriors and exclaimed, "Beat the martial drum." Even as he said so someone sneezed on the left. The sooth-sayers said, "The sneeze has come from an auspicious quarter ! (The issue will be

a happy one.)" An old man thought over the meaning of the omen and exclaimed, "Let us go and meet Bharata; there will be no conflict. Bharata is out to persuade Śrī Rāma to return. The omen tells us that there will be no discord." On hearing this Guha said, "The old man says aright. Fools act precipitately and repent. If we come to a clash without knowing Bharata's intentions and ascertaining his temper and disposition, we shall be doing much harm to our own cause.

(1—4)

दो०—गहहु घाट भट समिटि सब लेउँ मरम मिलि जाइ ।
बूझि मित्र अरि मध्य गति तस तब करिहउँ आइ ॥ १९२ ॥

"Close up, all my warriors, and blockade the ghats till I meet Bharata and find out what is in his mind. When I have ascertained his friendly, hostile or neutral attitude I shall act accordingly after that. (192)

चौ०—लखब सनेहु सुभायँ सुहाएँ । बैरु प्रीति नहिं दुरइँ दुराएँ ॥
अस कहि भेंट सँजोवन लागे । कंद मूल फल खग मृग मागे ॥ १ ॥
मीन पीन पाठीन पुराने । भरि भरि भार कहारन्ह आने ॥
मिलन साजु सजि मिलन सिधाए । मंगल मूल सगुन सुभ पाए ॥ २ ॥
देखि दूरि तें कहि निज नामू । कीन्ह मुनीसहि दंड प्रनामू ॥
जानि रामप्रिय दीन्हि असीसा । भरतहि कहेउ बुझाइ मुनीसा ॥ ३ ॥
राम सखा सुनि संदनु त्यागा । चले उतरि उमगत अनुरागा ॥
गाउँ जाति गुहँ नाउँ सुनाई । कीन्ह जोहारु माथ महि लाई ॥ ४ ॥

"I shall test his love on the touchstone of his friendly disposition; for hatred and love cannot be disguised even if one tries to do so." So saying he began to collect articles for making a present and sent for bulbs, roots and fruits as well as birds and deer. Men of the porter class also brought loads of fat and ripe fish of the Pāṭhīna * species. Thus equipping himself with presents he proceeded to meet Bharata and met with auspicious and happy omens. As soon as he saw the chief of sages, Vasiṣṭha, he mentioned his own name and prostrated himself before the sage from a distance. The sage, who knew him to be a friend of Śrī Rāma, bestowed his blessing on him and told Bharata in detail about him. Hearing that he was a friend of Śrī Rāma, Bharata alighted from his chariot and, leaving it behind, advanced towards him with a heart overflowing with love. Guha, on his part, mentioned his village, caste and name and greeted him by placing his head on the ground.

(1--4)

दो०—करत दंडवत देखि तेहि भरत लीन्ह उर लाइ ।
मनहुँ लखन सन भेंट भइ प्रेमु न हृदयँ समाइ ॥ १९३ ॥

When Bharata saw him falling prostrate on the ground he lifted him and pressed him to his bosom. He felt as if he had met Lakṣmaṇa and the surging emotion of his heart could not be repressed. (193)

* The Pāṭhīna is said to be a kind of sea-fish, the *Silurus Pelorius* or *Boalis*.

चौ०—भेंटत भरतु ताहि अति प्रीती । लोग सिहाहिं प्रेम कै रीती ॥
धन्य धन्य धुनि मंगल मूला । सुर सराहि तेहि बरिसहिं फूला ॥ १ ॥
लोक बेद सब भाँतिहिं नीचा । जासु छाँह छुइ लेइअ सींचा ॥
तेहि भरि अंक राम लघु भ्राता । मिलत पुलक परिपूरित गाता ॥ २ ॥
राम राम कहि जे जमुहाहीं । तिन्हहि न पाप पुंज समुहाहीं ॥
यह तौ राम लाइ उर लीन्हा । कुल समेत जगु पावन कीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
करमनास जलु सुरसरि परई । तेहि को कहहु सीस नहिं धरई ॥
उलटा नामु जपत जगु जाना । बालमीकि भए ब्रह्म समाना ॥ ४ ॥

Bharata embraced him with great affection and the people admired the mode of his love. Raising a jubilant cry of applause the gods extolled him and rained flowers on him "This man is low in the eyes of the world as well as from the point of view of the Vedas, so much so that one must bathe even on crossing his shadow. Yet Śrī Rāma's younger brother, Bharata, has met him in close embrace, his body thrilling all over with joy. Hosts of sins turn away from them who utter the name of Rāma even while yawning. As for this man he was embraced by Śrī Rāma Himself, who thereby bestowed on him and his family the efficacy of sanctifying the whole world. Where the water of the Karmanāsā joins the celestial stream (the Gaṅgā) tell me who would not place it on his head! The whole world knows how Vālmīki became as good as Brahma (God Himself) by repeating the name (Rāma) in the reverse way (as Marā). (1—4)

दो०—स्वपच सवर खस जमन जड़ पावँर कोल किरात ।
रामु कहत पावन परम होत भुवन बिख्यात ॥ १९४ ॥

"Even a pariah*, a Śabara (Bhil), a Khasi, the stupid barbarian and the vile Kola and Kirāta get supremely sanctified and get renowned through all the spheres by uttering the name of Rāma. (194)

चौ०—नहिं अचिरिजु जुग जुग चलि आई । केहि न दीन्हि रघुबीर बड़ाई ॥
राम नाम महिमा सुर कहहीं । सुनि सुनि अवध लोग सुखु लहहीं ॥ १ ॥
रामसखहि मिलि भरत सप्रेमा । पूँछी कुसल सुमंगल खेमा ॥
देखि भरत कर सीलु सनेहू । भा निपाद तेहि समय बिदेहू ॥ २ ॥
सकुच सनेहु मोदु मन बाढ़ा । भरतहि चितवत एकटक ठाढ़ा ॥
धरि धीरजु पद बंदि बहोरी । बिनय सप्रेम करत कर जोरी ॥ ३ ॥
कुसल मूल पद पंकज पेखी । मैं तिहुँ काल कुसल निज लेखी ॥
अब प्रभु परम अनुग्रह तोरें । सहित कोटि कुल मंगल मोरें ॥ ४ ॥

* The word used in the original is 'Swapacha' (*lit.*, one who cooks the flesh of a dog, *i. e.*, lives on the flesh of dogs; the Kolas and Kirātas are wild mountain tribes; the Khasis are another hilly tribe inhabiting Khasa, a hilly tract in Northern India.

"It is no wonder; it has been so for ages. Who has not been exalted through contact with the Hero of Raghu's race ?" In this way the gods glorified Śrī Rāma's name and the people of Ayodhyā rejoiced as they heard the praise. Having thus met Śrī Rāma's friend (Guha), Bharata lovingly enquired after his health, welfare and happiness. Seeing Bharata's amiability and affection on that occasion the Nisada forgot all about himself. His bashfulness love and soul's delight grew; and he stood gazing at Bharata with unwinking eyes. Collecting himself he bowed at Bharata's feet again and with joined palms lovingly submitted, "Now that I have beheld your lotus feet, which are the very fountain of happiness, I have accounted myself blessed for all time And now, my lord, by your supreme grace my welfare is assured for millions of generations. (1–4)

दो०—समुझि मोरि करतूति कुलु प्रभु महिमा जियँ जोइ।
जो न भजइ रघुबीर पद जग बिधि बंचित सोइ॥ १९५॥

"Remembering my doings and my descent, on the one hand, and realizing the Lord's greatness, on the other, he who does not devote himself to Śrī Rāma's feet has been befooled in this world by Providence. (195)

चौ०—कपटी कायर कुमति कुजाती। लोक बेद बाहेर सब भाँती॥
राम कीन्ह आपन जबही तें। भयउँ भुवन भूषन तबही तें॥ १॥
देखि प्रीति सुनि बिनय सुहाई। मिलेउ बहोरि भरत लघु भाई॥
कहि निषाद निज नाम सुबानीं। सादर सकल जोहारीं रानीं॥ २॥
जानि लखन सम देहिं असीसा। जिअहु सुखी सय लाख बरीसा॥
निरखि निषादु नगर नर नारी। भए सुखी जनु लखनु निहारी॥ ३॥
कहहिं लहेउ एहिं जीवन लाहू। भेंटेउ रामभद्र भरि बाहू॥
सुनि निषादु निज भाग बड़ाई। प्रमुदित मन लइ चलेउ लेवाई॥ ४॥

"False, cowardly, evil-minded and low-born as I am and cast off from society as well as from the fold of the Vedas in every way, I have become the ornament of the world ever since Śrī Rāma took me for his own." Seeing his affection and hearing his humble submission Bharata's younger brother, Śatrughna, embraced him next. The Nisāda chief then greeted all the dowager queens in polite and respectful terms, mentioning his name each time. Treating him on the same footing as Laksmana they gave him their blessing: May you live happily for millions of years. The men and women of the city were as glad to see the Nisāda chief as if they saw Laksmana, and said, "He has surely reaped the reward of his existence in that our beloved Rāma folded him in his arms." Hearing them extol his good fortune the Nisāda chief led them with a cheerful heart. (1–4)

दो०—सनकारे सेवक सकल चले स्वामि रुख पाइ।
घर तरु तर सर बाग बन बास बनाएन्हि जाइ॥ १९६॥

Receiving a signal from him and learning their master's will all his attendants dispersed; and reaching the residential quarters, the foot of trees,

ponds, orchards and groves they made room for the guests to take up their lodging. (196)

चौ०—सृंगबेरपुर भरत दीख जब । भे सनेहँ सब अंग सिथिल तब ॥
सोहत दिएँ निषादहि लागू । जनु तनु धरें बिनय अनुरागू ॥ १ ॥
एहि बिधि भरत सेनु सबु संगा । दीखि जाइ जग पावनि गंगा ॥
रामघाट कहँ कीन्ह प्रनामू । भा मनु मगनु मिले जनु रामू ॥ २ ॥
करहिं प्रनाम नगर नर नारी । मुदित ब्रह्ममय बारि निहारी ॥
करि मज्जनु मागहिं कर जोरी । रामचंद्र पद प्रीति न थोरी ॥ ३ ॥
भरत कहेउ सुरसरि तव रेनू । सकल सुखद सेवक सुरधेनू ॥
जोरि पानि बर मागउँ एहू । सीय राम पद सहज सनेहू ॥ ४ ॥

When Bharata beheld the town of Śṛṅgaverapura, all his limbs were overpowered with emotion. Leaning on the Niṣāda chief he presented a goodly sight; it appeared as if meekness and love had taken a living form. In this way Bharata with all his army went and saw the stream of the Gaṅgā, which purifies the whole world. He made obeisance to the ghat where Śrī Rāma had bathed and said His prayers; and his soul was as enraptured as if he had met Śrī Rāma Himself. The men and women of the city bowed low; they were glad to see the divine stream. Taking a dip into the river they begged with joined palms to be favoured with abundant love for Śrī Rāmachandra's feet. Bharata exclaimed, "Mother Gaṅgā! your sands are delightful to all and the very cow of plenty to your devotees. With joined palms, therefore, I ask of you only one boon; viz., spontaneous love for the feet of Sītā and Śrī Rāma." (1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि मज्जनु भरतु करि गुर अनुसासन पाइ ।
मातु नहानीं जानि सब डेरा चले लवाइ ॥ १९७ ॥

In this way after taking a dip into the Gaṅgā and receiving his Guru's commands, and on learning that all his mothers had finished their bath he had the tents shifted. (197)

चौ०—जहँ तहँ लोगन्ह डेरा कीन्हा । भरत सोधु सबही कर लीन्हा ॥
सुर सेवा करि आयसु पाई । राम मातु पहिं गे दोउ भाई ॥ १ ॥
चरन चाँपि कहि कहि मृदु बानी । जननीं सकल भरत सनमानी ॥
भाइहि सौंपि मातु सेवकाई । आपु निषादहि लीन्ह बोलाई ॥ २ ॥
चले सखा कर सों कर जोरें । सिथिल सरीरु सनेह न थोरें ॥
पूँछत सखहि सो ठाउँ देखाऊ । नेकु नयन मन जरनि जुड़ाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
जहँ सिय रामु लखनु निसि सोए । कहत भरे जल लोचन कोए ॥
भरत बचन सुनि भयउ बिषादू । तुरत तहाँ लइ गयउ निषादू ॥ ४ ॥

The people took up their lodgings at different places and Bharata made enquiries about all. After worshipping the gods and taking leave of them the two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) went up to Śrī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā).

Bharata showed respect to all his mothers by kneading their feet and speaking to each in polite terms. Then entrusting his brother with the service of his mothers he himself summoned the Niṣāda chief and went hand in hand with him, his body overpowered with excess of love. He asked his friend to show him the spot—and there by soothe the agony of his eyes and soul to some extent—where Sītā, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmana had slept at night. Even as he spoke the corners of his eyes were filled with tears. The Niṣāda chief was distressed to hear Bharata's words and presently took him to the spot— (1—4)

दो०—जहँ सिंसुपा पुनीत तर रघुबर किय बिश्रामु ।
अति सनेहँ सादर भरत कीन्हेउ दंड प्रनामु ॥ १९८ ॥

—Where the Chief of Raghu's line had rested under a holy Aśoka tree. With great affection and reverence Bharata prostrated himself there. (198)

चौ०—कुस साँथरी निहारि सुहाई । कीन्ह प्रनामु प्रदच्छिन जाई ॥
चरन रेख रज आँखिन्ह लाई । बनइ न कहत प्रीति अधिकाई ॥ १ ॥
कनक बिंदु दुइ चारिक देखे । राखे सीस सीय सम लेखे ॥
सजल बिलोचन हृदयँ गलानी । कहत सखा सन बचन सुबानी ॥ २ ॥
श्रीहत सीय बिरहँ दुतिहीना । जथा अवध नर नारि बिलीना ॥
पिता जनक देउँ पटतर केही । करतल भोगु जोगु जग जेही ॥ ३ ॥
ससुर भानुकुल भानु भुआलू । जेहि सिहात अमरावतिपालू ॥
प्राननाथु रघुनाथ गोसाईं । जो बड़ होत सो राम बड़ाईं ॥ ४ ॥

Beholding a lovely litter of Kuśa grass he paced round it clockwise and made obeisance. He also placed the dust of Śrī Rāma's footprints on his eyes with an excess of love which could not be described in words. He saw there a few gold spangles, which he placed on his head and treated them on a par with Sītā. With tears in his eyes and a heart full of remorse he spoke to his friend in sweet accents: "These spangles have lost their charm and appear lustreless due to their separation from Sītā, even as the people of Ayodhyā, both men and women, are spent through sorrow. To whom shall I liken her father, Janaka, who in this world is a master of asceticism and enjoyment both? And she had for her father-in-law King Daśaratha, the sun of the solar race, who was the envy even of the lord of paradise (Indra). And her beloved lord is no other than Lord Śrī Rama, from whose glory all great ones derive their greatness! (1—4)

दो०—पति देवता सुतीय मनि सीय साँथरी देखि ।
बिहरत हृदउ न हहरि हर पबि तें कठिन बिसेषि ॥ १९९ ॥

"Even as I gaze on the litter used by Sītā, the jewel among virtuous women devoted to their lord, my heart does not break in horror; it is harder than adamant, my God. (199)

चौ०—लालन जोगु लखन लघु लोने । भे न भाइ अस अहहिं न होने ॥
पुरजन प्रिय पितु मातु दुलारे । सिय रघुबीरहि प्रानपिआरे ॥ १ ॥
मृदु मूरति सुकुमार सुभाऊ । तात बाउ तन लाग न काऊ ॥
ते बन सहहिं बिपति सब भाँती । निदरे कोटि कुलिस एहिं छाती ॥ २ ॥
राम जनमि जगु कीन्ह उजागर । रूप सील सुख सब गुन सागर ॥
पुरजन परिजन गुर पितु माता । राम सुभाउ सबहि सुखदाता ॥ ३ ॥
बैरिउ राम बड़ाई करहीं । बोलनि मिलनि बिनय मन हरहीं ॥
सारद कोटि कोटि सत सेषा । करि न सकहिं प्रभु गुन गन लेखा ॥ ४ ॥

"And my younger brother, Lakṣmaṇa, is so comely and worth fondling; never was there such a brother, nor is there, nor will be. Beloved of the people and the darling of his parents, he is dear as life to both Sītā and the Hero of Raghu's line. Nay, he is so delicate of frame and tender of disposition and his body has never been exposed to hot winds; yet he is bearing hardships of every kind in the woods. Oh! my breast has outdone millions of thunderbolts. As for Śrī Rāma he has illumined the world by being born in it; he is such an ocean of beauty, amiability, joy and all excellences. Śrī Rāma's disposition is the delight of the people of Ayodhyā and his own family, much more of his preceptor and parents. Even enemies praise Śrī Rāma, who steals the heart by his polite speech, agreeable manners and modesty of behaviour. Millions of Śāradās (goddesses of speech) and hundreds of millions of Śeṣas (serpent-gods) are unable to reckon up the virtues of the Lord.
(1—4)

दो०—सुखस्वरूप रघुबंसमनि मंगल मोद निधान ।
ते सोवत कुस डासि महि बिधि गति अति बलवान ॥ २०० ॥

"That jewel of Raghu's line, who is bliss personified and a mine of joy and blessings, sleeps on the ground spreading the Kuśa grass on it! The ways of Providence are inexorable indeed." (200)

चौ०—राम सुना दुखु कान न काऊ । जीवनतरु जिमि जोगवइ राऊ ॥
पलक नयन फनि मनि जेहि भाँती । जोगवहिं जननि सकल दिन राती ॥ १ ॥
ते अब फिरत बिपिन पदचारी । कंद मूल फल फूल अहारी ॥
धिग कैकई अमंगल मूला । भइसि प्रान प्रियतम प्रतिकूला ॥ २ ॥
मैं धिग धिग अघ उदधि अभागी । सबु उतपातु भयउ जेहि लागी ॥
कुल कलंकु करि सृजेउ बिधाताँ । साइँदोह मोहि कीन्ह कुमाताँ ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि सप्रेम समुझाव निषादू । नाथ करिअ कत बादि बिषादू ॥
राम तुम्हहि प्रिय तुम्ह प्रिय रामहि । यह निरजोसु दोसु बिधि बामहि ॥ ४ ॥

"Śrī Rāma had never heard any mention of sorrow; the king (our father) tended him like the tree of life. Nay, all the mothers cherished him day and night even as the eyelids protect the eyes or a serpent guards the gem on its head. The same Rāma now wanders through the forest on foot living on

bulbs, roots, fruits and flowers. Accursed is Kaikeyī (my mother), the root of evil, who turned hostile to him (her own husband) who was the dearest object of her life. And twice accursed is my own wretched self, the ocean of sin and the occasion of all trouble. While God created me as a blot on my family, my wicked mother has made me the enemy of my master." Hearing this the Nisada chief lovingly comforted him: "Why should you lament in vain? Śrī Rāma is dear to you, and you are dear to Rama: this is a settled fact, and the blame rests with an adverse fate. (1—4)

छं०—विधि बाम की करनी कठिन जेहिं मातु कीन्ही बावरी ।
तेहि राति पुनि पुनि करहिं प्रभु सादर सरहना रावरी ॥
तुलसी न तुम्ह सो राम प्रीतमु कहतु हौं सौंहें किएँ ।
परिनाम मंगल जानि अपने आनिए धीरजु हिएँ ॥

"Cruel indeed are the doings of an adverse fate, which drove mother Kaikeyī mad. The Lord reverently praised you again and again that night. There is no one, says Tulasīdāsa, so supremely dear to Śrī Rāma as you are: I declare this on oath. Therefore, be assured that all will be well in the end and take courage in your heart.

सो०—अंतरजामी रामु सकुच सप्रेम कृपायतन ।
चलिअ करिअ बिश्रामु यह बिचारि दृढ़ आनि मन ॥ २०१ ॥

"Śrī Rāma knows the heart of all; nay, He is an embodiment of tenderness, affection and compassion. Considering this and summoning courage in your heart, please go and take rest." (201)

चौ०—सखा बचन सुनि उर धरि धीरा । बास चले सुमिरत रघुबीरा ॥
यह सुधि पाइ नगर नर नारी । चले बिलोकन आरत भारी ॥ १ ॥
परदखिना करि करहिं प्रनामा । देहिं कैकइहि खोरि निकामा ॥
भरि भरि बारि बिलोचन लेहीं । बाम बिधातहि दूषन देहीं ॥ २ ॥
एक सराहहिं भरत सनेहू । कोउ कह नृपति निबाहेउ नेहू ॥
निंदहिं आपु सराहि निषादहि । को कहि सकइ बिमोह बिषादहि ॥ ३ ॥
एहि बिधि राति लोगु सबु जागा । भा भिनुसार गुदारा लागा ॥
गुरहि सुनावँ चढ़ाइ सुहाईं । नईं नाव सब मातु चढ़ाईं ॥ ४ ॥
दंड चारि महँ भा सबु पारा । उतरि भरत तब सबहि सँभारा ॥ ५ ॥

Bharata took comfort at the words of his friend and proceeded towards his lodgings with his thoughts directed towards the Hero of Raghu's race. On receiving this news the men and women of the city sallied forth to see the place (where Srī Rama had slept one night) much distressed at heart. Pacing round the spot clockwise they made obeisance to it and blamed Kaikeyī to their heart's content. Tears rushed to their eyes again and again and they reproached cruel Fate. Some would praise Bharata's love, while others

said the king had vindicated his affection. They would reproach themselves and praise the Niṣāda chief; who can describe their confusion and woe? In this way they all kept vigil overnight and at daybreak the passage across the river began. The Guru was put on a good and handsome boat, and all the mothers on another newly-built one. In an hour and a half everyone was taken across. When Bharata had alighted, he made sure that all had come. (1—5)

दो०—प्रातक्रिया करि मातु पद बंदि गुरहि सिरु नाइ।
आगें किए निषाद गन दीन्हेउ कटकु चलाइ ॥ २०२ ॥

Having finished the morning duties Bharata adored his mothers' feet and bowed his head to the preceptor, and sending a party of the Niṣādas ahead started the whole host. (202)

चौ०—कियउ निषादनाथु अगुआईं। मातु पालकीं सकल चलाईं ॥
साथ बोलाइ भाइ लघु दीन्हा। बिप्रन्ह सहित गवनु गुर कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
आपु सुरसरिहि कीन्ह प्रनामू। सुमिरे लखन सहित सिय रामू ॥
गवने भरत पयादेहिं पाए। कोतल संग जाहिं डोरिआए ॥ २ ॥
कहहिं सुसेवक बारहिं बारा। होइअ नाथ अस्व असवारा ॥
रामु पयादेहि पायँ सिधाए। हम कहँ रथ गज बाजि बनाए ॥ ३ ॥
सिर भर जाउँ उचित अस मोरा। सब तें सेवक धरमु कठोरा ॥
देखि भरत गति सुनि मृदु बानी। सब सेवक गन गरहिं गलानी ॥ ४ ॥

He made the Niṣāda chief lead the van and then started the palanquins carrying the queen-mothers, and summoning his younger brother (Śatrughna) told him off as their escort. The Guru proceeded next along with the other Brahmans. He himself then made obeisance to the celestial river, invoked Sītā, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa and set forth on foot; while riding horses meant for the king were led by the bridle along with him. Again and again his faithful servants said, "Be pleased, sire, to mount your horse." "Śrī Rāma has gone on foot; while chariots, elephants and horses are intended for me! What behoves me is that I should walk on my head; for the duty of a servant is harder than any other duty." Seeing his behaviour and hearing his polite speech all his servants melted out of a feeling of self disparagement. (1—4)

दो०—भरत तीसरे पहर कहँ कीन्ह प्रबेसु प्रयाग।
कहत राम सिय राम सिय उमगि उमगि अनुराग ॥ २०३ ॥

Bharata entered the limits of Prayāga (the area surrounding the confluence of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā near Allahabad) in the afternoon; overflowing with love he cried "Rāma, Sītā !" "Rāma, Sītā !" even as he went. (203)

चौ०—झलका झलकत पायन्ह कैसें। पंकज कोस ओस कन जैसें ॥
भरत पयादेहिं आए आजू। भयउ दुखित सुनि सकल समाजू ॥ १ ॥
खबरि लीन्ह सब लोग नहाए। कीन्ह प्रनामु त्रिबेनिहिं आए ॥
सबिधि सितासित नीर नहाने। दिए दान महिसुर सनमाने ॥ २ ॥

देखत स्यामल धवल हलोरे । पुलकि सरीर भरत कर जोरे ॥
सकल काम प्रद तीरथराऊ । बेद बिदित जग प्रगट प्रभाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
मागउँ भीख त्यागि निज धरमू । आरत काह न करइ कुकरमू ॥
अस जियँ जानि सुजान सुदानी । सफल करहिं जग जाचक बानी ॥ ४ ॥

The blisters on the soles of his feet glistened like dew-drops on a lotus bud. The whole company was grieved to hear that Bharata had made the day's march on foot. After ascertaining that all had finished their ablutions, he repaired to the confluence of the Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Saraswatī and did homage to it. He bathed in the parti-coloured waters with due ceremony and honoured the Brahmans bestowing gifts on them. As he watched the coming of the dark and white waves Bharata felt a thrill of joy over his body and he joined his palms in prayer: "You are the bestower of all desired objects, O king of sacred places; your glory is known to the Vedas and manifest throughout the world. Abandoning the course of conduct prescribed for a Kṣatriya I beg alms of you. But what vile act is there that an afflicted soul would not stoop to ? Realizing this in their heart of hearts the wise and generous donors accomplish in this world the prayer of the suppliant. (1—4)

दो०—अरथ न धरम न काम रुचि गति न चहउँ निरबान ।
जनम जनम रति राम पद यह बरदानु न आन ॥ २०४ ॥

"I have no liking for wealth nor for religious merit nor for sensuous enjoyment nor again do I seek the state of perfect and perpetual calm. Birth after birth let me have devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet: this is the only boon I ask and nought else. (204)

चौ०—जानहुँ रामु कुटिल करि मोही । लोग कहउ गुर साहिब द्रोही ॥
सीता राम चरन रति मोरें । अनुदिन बढ़उ अनुग्रह तोरें ॥ १ ॥
जलदु जनम भरि सुरति बिसारउ । जाचत जलु पबि पाहन डारउ ॥
चातकु रटनि घटें घटि जाई । बढ़ें प्रेमु सब भाँति भलाई ॥ २ ॥
कनकहिं बान चढ़इ जिमि दाहें । तिमि प्रियतम पद नेम निबाहें ॥
भरत बचन सुनि माझ त्रिबेनी । भइ मृदु बानि सुमंगल देनी ॥ ३ ॥
तात भरत तुम्ह सब बिधि साधू । राम चरन अनुराग अगाधू ॥
बादि गलानि करहु मन माहीं । तुम्ह सम रामहि कोउ प्रिय नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"Let Śrī Rāma take me for a wicked fellow, and let the people call me an enemy of my preceptor and master. All the same by your grace may my devotion to the feet of Sītā and Śrī Rāma grow day by day. The cloud may neglect the Chātaka bird all its life and on its asking water may discharge thunderbolt and hail. But the bird will fall in the estimation of others if it ceases to call out to the cloud. It will gain in every way only by intensifying its love for the latter. Just as gold gets brighter by being put into the fire, even so the lover shines by sticking to his vow of devotion to

the feet of his most beloved lord." In response to Bharata's prayer there came a sweet and benedictory utterance from the midst of the Triveṇī:—"Dear Bharata, you are pious in every way and your love for Śrī Rāma's feet is unbounded. In vain do you harbour depressing thoughts in your mind; there is no one so dear to Rāma as you are." (1—4)

दो०—तनु पुलकेउ हियँ हरषु सुनि बेनि बचन अनुकूल।
भरत धन्य कहि धन्य सुर हरषित बरषहिं फूल ॥ २०५ ॥

A thrill ran through Bharata's body and his soul rejoiced to hear the agreeable words of the (deity presiding over) Triveṇī. Exclaiming "Bharata is praiseworthy, all praise to him!" the gods joyfully rained flowers. (205)

चौ०—प्रमुदित तीरथराज निवासी। बैखानस बटु गृही उदासी ॥
कहहिं परसपर मिलि दस पाँचा। भरत सनेहु सीलु सुचि साँचा ॥ १ ॥
सुनत राम गुन ग्राम सुहाए। भरद्वाज मुनिबर पहिं आए ॥
दंड प्रनामु करत मुनि देखे। मूरतिमंत भाग्य निज लेखे ॥ २ ॥
धाइ उठाइ लाइ उर लीन्हे। दीन्हि असीस कृतारथ कीन्हे ॥
आसनु दीन्ह नाइ सिरु बैठे। चहत सकुच गृहँ जनु भजि पैठे ॥ ३ ॥
मुनि पूँछब कछु यह बड़ सोचू। बोले रिषि लखि सीलु सँकोचू ॥
सुनहु भरत हम सब सुधि पाई। बिधि करतब पर किछु न बसाई ॥ ४ ॥

The inhabitants of Prayāga (the king of sacred places), including anchorites, religious students, householders and recluses, were transported with joy. Meeting in batches of five to ten they said to one another, "Bharata's affection and amiability are artless and genuine." Hearing of Śrī Rāma's charming virtues he came to the great sage Bharadwāja. The sage saw him falling prostrate before him and looked upon him as his own good-luck personified. Running up and lifting him the sage clasped him to his bosom and gratified him by bestowing his blessing on him. Offered a seat by the sage he sat down with his head bent low, as if he would run away and hide his face in a den of bashfulness. He felt much perturbed at the thought that the sage might ask him any question. Seeing his amiability and confusion of mind the sage said to him, "Listen, Bharata! I have already heard everything; but we have no control over the doings of Fate. (1—4)

दो०—तुम्ह गलानि जियँ जनि करहु समुझि मातु करतूति।
तात कैकइहि दोसु नहिं गई गिरा मति धूति ॥ २०६ ॥

"Be not distressed at heart by the thought of what your mother has done. It is no fault of Kaikeyī, dear child; it was the goddess of speech who deluded her mind. (206)

चौ०—यहउ कहत भल कहिहि न कोऊ। लोकु बेदु बुध संमत दोऊ ॥
तात तुम्हार बिमल जसु गाई। पाइहि लोकउ बेदु बड़ाई ॥ १ ॥

लोक बेद संमत सबु कहई। जेहि पितु देइ राजु सो लहई॥
राउ सत्यब्रत तुम्हहि बोलाई। देत राजु सुखु धरमु बड़ाई॥ २॥
राम गवनु बन अनरथ मूला। जो सुनि सकल बिस्व भइ सूला॥
सो भावी बस रानि अयानी। करि कुचालि अंतहुँ पछितानी॥ ३॥
तहँउँ तुम्हार अलप अपराधू। कहै सो अधम अयान असाधू॥
करतेहु राजु त तुम्हहि न दोषू। रामहि होत सुनत संतोषू॥ ४॥

"Nobody would approve of it even if I said so; for the wise recognize worldly opinion as well as the judgment of the Vedas. By singing your unsullied glory, however, the world and the Vedas both will be exalted. The world as well as the Vedas admit it and everyone says that of a king's sons he alone gets the throne on whom his father bestows it. The king, who was above all true to his vow, would have called you and bestowed the kingdom on you; and this would have brought him joy religious merit and glory. But the root of all trouble was Rāma's exile to the forest and the whole universe was pained to hear of it. It was, however as fate would have it; much as the foolish queen (Kaikeyī) did wrong, she now repents for it But he who lays the least blame for it on you is vile, ignorant and wicked. Even if you accepted the sovereignty no blame would attach to you and even Rāma would have been gratified to hear of it. (1–4)

दो०– अब अति कीन्हेहु भरत भल तुम्हहि उचित मत एहु।
सकल सुमंगल मूल जग रघुबर चरन सनेहु॥ २०७॥

"But what you have done now is excellent; your standpoint is quite justified. For devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet is the root of all choice blessings in the world. (207)

चौ०—सो तुम्हार धनु जीवनु प्राना। भूरिभाग को तुम्हहि समाना॥
यह तुम्हार आचरजु न ताता। दसरथ सुअन राम प्रिय भ्राता॥ १॥
सुनहु भरत रघुबर मन माहीं। पेम पात्रु तुम्ह सम कोउ नाहीं॥
लखन राम सीतहि अति प्रीती। निसि सब तुम्हहि सराहत बीती॥ २॥
जाना मरमु नहात प्रयागा। मगन होहिं तुम्हरें अनुरागा॥
तुम्ह पर अस सनेहु रघुबर कें। सुख जीवन जग जस जड़ नर कें॥ ३॥
यह न अधिक रघुबीर बड़ाई। प्रनत कुटुंब पाल रघुराई॥
तुम्ह तौ भरत मोर मत एहू। धरें देह जनु राम सनेहू॥ ४॥

"And that is your wealth and life, nay, your vital breath. Who is, then, so highly blessed as you? This is, however, not to be wondered at in your case, who are a son of King Dasaratha and a beloved brother of Rāma. I tell you Bharata there is no one held so dear in his heart by the chief of Raghu's line as you. Laksmana, Rāma and Sītā most fondly praised you the whole night. I came to know the secret only when they were bathing at Prayāga; they would feel overwhelmed with love for you. The Chief of Raghu's line cherishes the same love for you as a fool does for a life of ease in this

world. This is, however, no great tribute to the Hero of Raghu's race, who cherishes the whole family of the suppliant. As for yourself, Bharata, my opinion is that you are the very incarnation of love for Rāma. (1—4)

दो०—तुम्ह कहँ भरत कलंक यह हम सब कहँ उपदेसु ।
राम भगति रस सिद्धि हित भा यह समउ गनेसु ॥ २०८ ॥

"What, to your mind, constitutes a slur on you is a lesson to us all. The present occasion has proved very propitious for preparing elixir in the form of devotion to Rāma. (208)

चौ०—नव बिधु बिमल तात जसु तोरा । रघुबर किंकर कुमुद चकोरा ॥
उदित सदा अँथइहि कबहूँ ना । घटिहि न जग नभ दिन दिन दूना ॥ १ ॥
कोक तिलोक प्रीति अति करिही । प्रभु प्रताप रबि छबिहि न हरिही ॥
निसि दिन सुखद सदा सब काहू । ग्रसिहि न कैकइ करतबु राहू ॥ २ ॥
पूरन राम सुपेम पियूषा । गुर अवमान दोष नहिं दूषा ॥
राम भगत अब अमिअँ अघाहूँ । कीन्हेहु सुलभ सुधा बसुधाहूँ ॥ ३ ॥
भूप भगीरथ सुरसरि आनी । सुमिरत सकल सुमंगल खानी ॥
दसरथ गुन गन बरनि न जाहीं । अधिकु कहा जेहि सम जग नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"Your glory, dear child, is a new type of spotless moon as it were; while Rāma's devotees are like so many water-lilies (that open only in moonlight) and Chakora birds (that are equally fond of the moon). It shall always remain above the horizon and shall never set; nay, it shall never wane and shall ever wax in the heavens of this world. The Chakrawāka bird in the shape of the three worlds shall cherish great love for it, while the sun in the shape of the Lord's glory shall never rob it of its splendour. It shall ever delight every one by day as well as by night and the demon Rāhu in the form of Kaikeyī's doings shall never eclipse it. It is full of nectar in the form of ideal love for Rāma and is untarnished by any stain resulting from a wrong done to the Guru*. Let Rāma's devotees now enjoy nectar to their heart's content since you have made it so easy of access even on earth. Of your forbears King Bhagīratha brought down the celestial river, the very thought of which is a fountain of all choice blessings. As for Daśaratha's virtues they are more than one can describe. What more shall I say about him? He had no equal in the world. (1—4)

---

* It is mentioned in the Purāṇas that Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the gods, on one occasion, when he was returning from a bath in the Gaṅgā, found his wife, Tārā, with the moon-god and threw his dripping robe at him and hit him in the face, thus causing the spots that are still to be seen there.

The descent of the celestial river, Gaṅgā, to the earth is associated with the name of King Bhagīratha, who is said to have practised austere penance for 1000 years and eventually succeeded in bringing down the stream. The Purāṇas tell us how King Sagara, an ancestor of the illustrious Bhagīratha, performed a horse sacrifice. The horse released by the king prior to the sacrifice was Indra. King Sagara's sons, 60,000 in number, went out in quest of the horse and dug the

दो०—जासु सनेह सकोच बस राम प्रगट भए आइ ।
जे हर हिय नयननि कबहुँ निरखे नहीं अघाइ ॥ २०९ ॥

"Won by his affection and meekness Śrī Rāma Himself appeared on earth—Rāma whom even Śiva has never seen with His mental eyes to His heart's fill. (209)

चौ०—कीरति बिधु तुम्ह कीन्ह अनूपा । जहँ बस राम पेम मृगरूपा ॥
तात गलानि करहु जियँ जाएँ । डरहु दरिद्रहि पारसु पाएँ ॥ १ ॥
सुनहु भरत हम झूठ न कहहीं । उदासीन तापस बन रहहीं ॥
सब साधन कर सुफल सुहावा । लखन राम सिय दरसनु पावा ॥ २ ॥
तेहि फल कर फलु दरस तुम्हारा । सहित पयाग सुभाग हमारा ॥
भरत धन्य तुम्ह जसु जगु जयऊ । कहि अस पेम मगन मुनि भयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि मुनि बचन सभासद हरषे । साधु सराहि सुमन सुर बरषे ॥
धन्य धन्य धुनि गगन पयागा । सुनि सुनि भरतु मगन अनुरागा ॥ ४ ॥

"You have created the peerless moon of your glory, which bears on it the figure of a deer * in the shape of love for Rāma. You feel distressed at heart, dear son, for no purpose: you fear poverty even though you have found the philosopher's stone. Listen, Bharata—I tell no falsehood, I am an ascetic dwelling in the forest and having no concern with the world—I obtained the happy and excellent reward of all spiritual practices when I saw Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma and Sītā. The reward of that reward itself is your sight, on

---

earth on all sides. While digging the earth in the north-east they found the horse by the side of the divine sage Kapila, who sat absorbed in meditation in the nether regions. The foolish and haughty princes took the sage for a thief and abusing him right and left ran to assault him. The sage now opened his eyes and lo! as a result of their offence the princes were instantly reduced to ashes by a fire which emanated from their body.

King Sagara had another son, Asamañjasa by name. His son, Aṁśumān, who was much devoted to his grandfather, proceeded in search of the horse under orders of the king, and found the animal near the ashes of his uncles. He also beheld the great sage Kapila and supplicated to him. The sage, who was pleased with his prayer, told him that the horse belonged to his grandfather and asked him to take it back. The sage further told him about the death of his uncles and added that the latter could attain salvation only if their remains could be washed by the Gangā. Aṁśumān took the horse to his grandfather, who duly performed the horse sacrifice and then retired to the woods after installing his grandson on the throne of Ayodhyā.

King Aṁśumān and his son Dilīpa successively practised austere penance for a number of years with a view to bringing the Gangā down to the mortal plane, but in vain. Dilīpa's son, Bhagīratha, at last succeeded in bringing the stream to the earth and took it to the place, where his uncles had lain in the form of ashes. The moment the water of the Ganga touched their remains their spirits re absolved from the sin of insulting a holy sage and ascended to heaven. Such is the ry of the Gangā, which is stated to have emanated from the feet of Bhagavān Viṣṇu Himself.

* The spot in the moon is represented by the Hindus as a deer even as it is presented in European nurseries as the form of a man.

which not only I but the whole of Prayāga deserves to be congratulated. Bharata, you deserve all praise since by your glory you have conquered the whole world." As he concluded his speech the sage was overwhelmed with love. Those who were assembled there rejoiced to hear the sage's words, while the gods acclaimed Bharata and rained flowers on him. Even as Bharata heard the shouts of applause in the heavens as well as in Prayāga he was overwhelmed with emotion. (1–4)

दो०—पुलक गात हियँ रामु सिय सजल सरोरुह नैन ।
करि प्रनामु मुनि मंडलिहि बोले गदगद बैन ॥ २१० ॥

Experiencing a thrill of joy all over his body, with his heart full of Sītā and Rāma and his lotus eyes wet with tears he made obeisance to the conclave of sages and thus spoke in a voice choked with emotion: (210)

चौ०—मुनि समाजु अरु तीरथराजू । साँचिहुँ सपथ अघाइ अकाजू ॥
एहिं थल जौं किछु कहिअ बनाई । एहि सम अधिक न अघ अधमाई ॥ १ ॥
तुम्ह सर्बग्य कहउँ सतिभाऊ । उर अंतरजामी रघुराऊ ॥
मोहि न मातु करतब कर सोचू । नहिं दुखु जियँ जगु जानिहि पोचू ॥ २ ॥
नाहिन डरु बिगरिहि परलोकू । पितहु मरन कर मोहि न सोकू ॥
सुकृत सुजस भरि भुअन सुहाए । लछिमन राम सरिस सुत पाए ॥ ३ ॥
राम बिरहँ तजि तनु छनभंगू । भूप सोच कर कवन प्रसंगू ॥
राम लखन सिय बिनु पग पनहीं । करि मुनि बेष फिरहिं बन बनहीं ॥ ४ ॥

"Here is an assembly of sages and we stand at a place which is known as the king of sacred places. Great harm will come to a man if he states even a fact on oath at such a place. And if one tells a lie there will be no greater sin and depravity. I speak out the truth knowing as I do that you are all-wise, while the Lord of Raghus has access to the inmost recesses of one's heart. I am not at all sorry for what my mother has done nor am I troubled at heart over the thought that the world will look upon me as mean. I fear not lest I should spoil my future life nor do I grieve over my father's death, whose meritorious deeds and fair renown shine forth throughout the universe, who had sons like Lakṣmaṇa and Śrī Rāma, and who quitted his frail body as a result of his separation from Śrī Rāma. Thus there is hardly any occasion for lamentation on his account. What pains me is that dressing themselves as hermits Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā roam from forest to forest without shoes on their feet. (1–4)

दो०—अजिन बसन फल असन महि सयन डासि कुस पात ।
बसि तरु तर नित सहत हिम आतप बरषा बात ॥ २११ ॥

"Clad in deerskin, living on bare fruits, reposing on the ground overspread with Kuśa grass and leaves and halting under trees they ever endure cold and sunshine, rain and storm! (211)

चौ०—एहि दुख दाहँ दहइ दिन छाती । भूख न बासर नीद न राती ॥
एहि कुरोग कर औषधु नाहीं । सोधेउँ सकल बिस्व मन माहीं ॥ १ ॥

मातु कुमत बढ़ई अघ मूला। तेहिं हमार हित कीन्ह बँसूला॥
कलि कुकाठ कर कीन्ह कुजंत्रू। गाड़ि अवधि पढ़ि कठिन कुमंत्रू॥ २॥
मोहि लगि यहु कुठाटु तेहिं ठाटा। घालेसि सब जगु बारहबाटा॥
मिटइ कुजोगु राम फिरि आएँ। बसइ अवध नहिं आन उपाएँ॥ ३॥
भरत बचन सुनि मुनि सुखु पाई। सबहिं कीन्हि बहु भाँति बड़ाई॥
तात करहु जनि सोचु बिसेषी। सब दुखु मिटिहि राम पग देखी॥ ४॥

"It is this burning agony which is ever consuming my breast, so that I feel no appetite by day and get no sleep at night. For this fell disease there is no remedy: I have mentally ransacked the whole world. My mother's evil counsel was like a sinful carpenter, who used my interests as an adze and fashioned out of the inauspicious wood of discord a destructive magical contrivance and muttering the terrible malevolent spell of (Śrī Rāma's) exile for a fixed term (of fourteen years) planted it (in the soil of Ayodhyā).* It is for my sake that she employed this infamous contrivance and brought ruin on the whole world. This calamity will cease only when Srī Rama returns; by no other means can Ayodhya thrive again." The sage (Bharadwaja) was gratified to hear Bharata's words and everyone applauded him in ways more than one. "Grieve not much, dear child; all your woes will disappear the moment you behold Srī Rāma's feet."

(1–4)

दो०—करि प्रबोधु मुनिबर कहेउ अतिथि पेमप्रिय होहु।
कंद मूल फल फूल हम देहिं लेहु करि छोहु॥ २१२॥

After comforting him (thus) the chief of the sages, Bharadwāja, said, "Be my beloved guest and deign to accept the bulbs, roots, fruits and flowers that we may offer you."

(212)

चौ०—सुनि मुनि बचन भरत हियँ सोचू। भयउ कुअवसर कठिन सँकोचू॥
जानि गरुइ गुर गिरा बहोरी। चरन बंदि बोले कर जोरी॥ १॥
सिर धरि आयसु करिअ तुम्हारा। परम धरम यहु नाथ हमारा॥
भरत बचन मुनिबर मन भाए। सुचि सेवक सिष निकट बोलाए॥ २॥
चाहिअ कीन्हि भरत पहुनाई। कंद मूल फल आनहु जाई॥
भलेहिं नाथ कहि तिन्ह सिर नाए। प्रमुदित निज निज काज सिधाए॥ ३॥
मुनिहि सोच पाहुन बड़ नेवता। तसि पूजा चाहिअ जस देवता॥
सुनि रिधि सिधि अनिमादिक आईं। आयसु होइ सो करहिं गोसाईं॥ ४॥

On hearing the sage's words Bharata was troubled at heart; for he was faced with a hard puzzle at a difficult time. Then, realizing the weightiness of an

* This evidently refers to a magical contrivance, intended to drive out an enemy from his home, in which wood is cut during a particular period from the tree known as the *helleric myrobalan* and after fashioning a pin out of it the same is planted in the enemy's house with the recitation of some spells. This is believed to bring the desired result.

elder's command he adored the sage's feet and replied with joined palms, "Your orders must be respectfully obeyed; this is my paramount duty, my lord." Bharata's reply pleased the great sage (Bharadwāja), who called his trusty servants and pupils by his side. "Bharata ought to be entertained; therefore, go and bring bulbs, roots and fruits." They bowed their heads with the words "Very well, sir!" and most gladly proceeded to take charge of their respective duties. The sage anxiously thought that he had invited a distinguished guest and that a deity must be worshipped according to his or her rank. Hearing of this riches of various kinds (Ṛddhis) and supernatural powers (Siddhis) like Animā (the power of assuming atomic size) appeared (in a visible form) and said, "We are prepared to do your bidding, O lord." (1—4)

दो०—राम बिरह ब्याकुल भरतु, सानुज सहित समाज।
पहुनाई करि हरहु श्रम कहा मुदित मुनिराज ॥ २१३ ॥

"Bharata as well as his younger brother (Śatrughna) and the whole company are distressed due to their separation from Rāma. Entertain them and relieve them of their fatigue," the great sage gladly said. (213)

चौ०—रिधि सिधि सिर धरि मुनिबर बानी। बड़भागिनि आपुहि अनुमानी ॥
कहहिं परसपर सिधि समुदाई। अतुलित अतिथि राम लघु भाई ॥ १ ॥
मुनि पद बंदि करिअ सोइ आजू। होइ सुखी सब राज समाजू ॥
अस कहि रचेउ रुचिर गृह नाना। जेहि बिलोकि बिलखाहिं बिमाना ॥ २ ॥
भोग बिभूति भूरि भरि राखे। देखत जिन्हहि अमर अभिलाषे ॥
दासीं दास साजु सब लीन्हें। जोगवत रहहिं मनहि मनु दीन्हें ॥ ३ ॥
सब समाजु सजि सिधि पल माहीं। जे सुख सुरपुर सपनेहुँ नाहीं ॥
प्रथमहिं बास दिए सब केही। सुंदर सुखद जथा रुचि जेही ॥ ४ ॥

The riches and supernatural powers in their embodied forms bowed to the command of the great sage and deemed themselves highly favoured. The Siddhis said to one another, "Srī Rāma's younger brother (Bharata) is a guest beyond compare. Bowing at the sage's feet let us do that which may gratify the whole of the royal party. So saying they erected beautiful dwellings of various patterns, which put to shame by their appearance the aerial cars of the gods. They were replete with abundant luxuries and splendours, which were coveted by immortals. Equipped with necessaries of all kinds men-servants and maid-servants remained in attendance focussing their attention on the pleasure of the guests. The Siddhis provided in an instant all the amenities which cannot be dreamt of even in heaven. First of all they assigned to each of the guests quarters that were charming and comfortable and suited to the taste of the occupant. (1—4)

दो०—बहुरि सपरिजन भरत कहुँ रिषि अस आयसु दीन्ह।
बिधि बिसमय दायकु बिभव मुनिबर तपबल कीन्ह ॥ २१४ ॥

Thereafter Bharata and his family were assigned quarters; for such were the instructions given by the sage. By dint of his penance the great sage produced wealth that astonished the Creator (Brahmā) himself. (214)

चौ०—मुनि प्रभाउ जब भरत बिलोका । सब लघु लगे लोकपति लोका ॥
सुख समाजु नहिं जाइ बखानी । देखत बिरति बिसारहिं ग्यानी ॥ १ ॥
आसन सयन सुबसन बिताना । बन बाटिका बिहग मृग नाना ॥
सुरभि फूल फल अमिअ समाना । बिमल जलासय बिबिध बिधाना ॥ २ ॥
असन पान सुचि अमिअ अमी से । देखि लोग सकुचात जमी से ॥
सुर सुरभी सुरतरु सबही कें । लखि अभिलाषु सुरेस सची कें ॥ ३ ॥
रितु बसंत बह त्रिबिध बयारी । सब कहँ सुलभ पदारथ चारी ॥
स्रक चंदन बनितादिक भोगा । देखि हरष बिसमय बस लोगा ॥ ४ ॥

When Bharata beheld the sage's power, the realms of all the rulers of the spheres looked small in his eyes. The luxuries were more than one could describe; the wise would forget their dispassion on seeing them. There were seats and couches, drapery, canopies, groves and gardens, birds and beasts of different species, sweet-scented flowers and fruits tasting like ambrosia, many a lake and pond of limpid water, foods and drinks of an undefiled and innocent character, which were more delicious than nectar and ambrosia, and which the guests would hesitate to accept like so many ascetics. Every house was supplied with a celestial cow (the cow of plenty) and a tree of paradise; Indra (the king of gods) and his consort, Śachī, grew covetous at their sight. It was the vernal season and a cool, fragrant and gentle breeze was blowing. Everyone had all the four prizes of life (viz., religious merit, worldly riches, sensuous enjoyment and final beatitude) within one's easy reach. At the sight of luxuries like garlands, sandal-paste and women the guests were overcome by a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow (joy at the unique hospitality shown by the sage by dint of his Yogic powers and sorrow because at a time when they should abstain from luxuries of every kind they were being offered the same). (1—4)

दो०—संपति चकई भरतु चक मुनि आयस खेलवार ।
तेहि निसि आश्रम पिंजराँ राखे भा भिनुसार ॥ २१५ ॥

Affluence, like a female Chakrawāka bird, and Bharata, as her mate, were imprisoned together that night in the cage of the hermitage by the sage's order, which may be compared here with a playful child. And they remained there till it was dawn.* (215)

[PAUSE 19 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

* The metaphor is intended to show that just as a Chakrawāka pair would never unite even though caught in a cage and would spend the whole night turning their back upon each other, likewise Bharata did not even care to look at the luxuries in the midst of which he was forced to remain overnight. He kept scrupulously aloof from them.

चौ०—कीन्ह निमज्जनु तीरथराजा । नाइ मुनिहि सिरु सहित समाजा ॥
रिषि आयसु असीस सिर राखी । करि दंडवत बिनय बहु भाषी ॥ १ ॥
पथ गति कुसल साथ सब लीन्हें । चले चित्रकूटहिं चितु दीन्हें ॥
रामसखा कर दीन्हें लागू । चलत देह धरि जनु अनुरागू ॥ २ ॥
नहिं पद त्रान सीस नहिं छाया । पेमु नेमु ब्रतु धरमु अमाया ॥
लखन राम सिय पंथ कहानी । पूँछत सखहि कहत मृदु बानी ॥ ३ ॥
राम बास थल बिटप बिलोकें । उर अनुराग रहत नहिं रोकें ॥
देखि दसा सुर बरिसहिं फूला । भइ मृदु महि मगु मंगल मूला ॥ ४ ॥

Bharata and his party took a dip into the Triveṇī (the confluence of the Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Saraswatī), the chief of sacred places, and bowed their head to the sage (Bharadwāja). Bharata reverently received his orders and blessings and prostrating himself made much supplication. Accompanied by expert guides and taking the whole host along with him he proceeded on his journey with his thoughts directed towards Chitrakūṭa. Holding Śrī Rāma's friend (Guha) by the hand he walked along like the very incarnation of love. He had no shoes and no umbrella over his head; and his love, self-discipline, austerity and piety were unfeigned. He asked his friend (Guha) to give an account of the wanderings of Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma and Sītā; while Guha narrated the same in soft accents. When he saw the spots where Śrī Rāma had rested and the trees under which he had halted the emotion within his breast could not be repressed. The gods who beheld his condition rained down flowers; the earth grew soft and the road became pleasant. (1—4)

दो०—किएँ जाहिं छाया जलद सुखद बहइ बर बात ।
तस मगु भयउ न राम कहँ जस भा भरतहि जात ॥ २१६ ॥

The clouds afforded him shade all along and a delightful and excellent breeze kept blowing. The journey was not so agreeable to Śrī Rāma as it proved to be for Bharata. (216)

चौ०—जड़ चेतन मग जीव घनेरे । जे चितए प्रभु जिन्ह प्रभु हेरे ॥
ते सब भए परम पद जोगू । भरत दरस मेटा भव रोगू ॥ १ ॥
यह बड़ि बात भरत कइ नाहीं । सुमिरत जिनहि रामु मन माहीं ॥
बारक राम कहत जग जेऊ । होत तरन तारन नर तेऊ ॥ २ ॥
भरतु राम प्रिय पुनि लघु भ्राता । कस न होइ मगु मंगलदाता ॥
सिद्ध साधु मुनिबर अस कहहीं । भरतहि निरखि हरषु हियँ लहहीं ॥ ३ ॥
देखि प्रभाउ सुरेसहि सोचू । जगु भल भलेहि पोच कहुँ पोचू ॥
गुर सन कहेउ करिअ प्रभु सोई । रामहि भरतहि भेट न होई ॥ ४ ॥

The numberless beings, both animate and inanimate, that saw the Lord or were seen by the Lord in their turn, had been rendered fit for the highest state; the sight of Bharata now finally rid them of the disease of transmigration. This was no great thing for Bharata, whom Śrī Rāma ever cherished in His heart. "Even they who utter the name of Rāma only once in this

world not only reach the other shore themselves but are also able to take others across. As for Bharata, he is dearly loved by Śrī Rāma and is His younger brother too. No wonder, then, that the journey should be delightful to him. Siddhas (a class of celestial beings), saints and great sages observed thus and rejoiced at heart to behold Bharata. Indra (the chief of gods) was filled with anxiety when he saw Bharata's power. The world is good to the good and vile for the vile. He said to his preceptor (the sage Bṛhaspati), "Something must be done, my lord, to prevent the meeting between Rama and Bharata.

(1—4)

दो०—रामु सँकोची प्रेम बस भरत सपेम पयोधि ।
बनी बात बेगरन चहति करिअ जतनु छलु सोधि ॥ २१७ ॥

"Śrī Rāma is scrupulous by nature and is won by love, while Bharata is an ocean of affection. What has already been accomplished thus threatens to be undone; therefore, finding out some stratagem let us use it as a remedial measure."

(217)

चौ०—बचन सुनत सुरगुरु मुसुकाने । सहसनयन बिनु लोचन जाने ॥
मायापति सेवक सन माया । करइ त उलटि परइ सुरराया ॥ १ ॥
तब किछु कीन्ह राम रुख जानी । अब कुचालि करि होइहि हानी ॥
सुनु सुरेस रघुनाथ सुभाऊ । निज अपराध रिसाहिं न काऊ ॥ २ ॥
जो अपराधु भगत कर करई । राम रोष पावक सो जरई ॥
लोकहुँ बेद बिदित इतिहासा । यह महिमा जानहिं दुरबासा ॥ ३ ॥
भरत सरिस को राम सनेही । जगु जप राम रामु जप जेही ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing his words the preceptor of the gods smiled and realized that, though endowed with a thousand eyes Indra was really blind (lacked discernment). He said, "If anyone practises deception on a devotee of Srī Rāma (the Lord of Māyā), it recoils on the artificer himself, O king of gods. Last time we did something knowing that it had Srī Rāma's tacit approval; but by resorting to some underhand means this time we are sure to meet with disaster. Listen, O lord of gods: it is Srī Rāma's nature not to be angry at any offence against Himself. But he who sins against His devotees is surely consumed in the fire of His wrath. The story is well known both in the world as well as in the Vedas: the sage Durvāsā* knows this glorious trait of Śrī Rāma's character. Has anyone loved Rāma even as Bharata, whose name is ever on the lips of Rāma, while Rāma's name is repeated by the whole world ?

(1—4)

* We read in the Purāṇas how the sage Durvasa, who is believed to be an incarnation of Lord Śiva and was noted for his irascible nature, once called on King Ambariṣa, a great devotee of Bhagavān Viṣṇu. It happened to be a Dwādaśī (the twelfth day of a lunar fortnight). The king naturally invited the sage to dine at his palace and the latter accepted his invitation and went to the river bank to take his bath. The king had fasted on the previous day and according to the scriptural injunctions it was necessary that he should break his fast while it was Dwādaśī. The sage, however, did not return in time and the pious king would never break his fast until the sage had

दो०—मनहुँ न आनिअ अमरपति रघुबर भगत अकाजु ।
अजसु लोक परलोक दुख दिन दिन सोक समाजु ॥ २१८ ॥

"Never harbour in your mind, O Lord of the immortals, even the thought of frustrating the purpose of a devotee of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line); for the same will bring you infamy in this world, sorrow in the next, and a series of woes in your day-to-day life. (218)

चौ०—सुनु सुरेस उपदेसु हमारा । रामहि सेवकु परम पिआरा ॥
मानत सुखु सेवक सेवकाईं । सेवक बैर बैरु अधिकाईं ॥ १ ॥
जद्यपि सम नहिं राग न रोषू । गहहिं न पाप पूनु गुन दोषू ॥
करम प्रधान बिस्व करि राखा । जो जस करइ सो तस फलु चाखा ॥ २ ॥
तदपि करहिं सम बिषम बिहारा । भगत अभगत हृदय अनुसारा ॥
अगुन अलेप अमान एकरस । रामु सगुन भए भगत पेम बस ॥ ३ ॥
राम सदा सेवक रुचि राखी । बेद पुरान साधु सुर साखी ॥
अस जियँ जानि तजहु कुटिलाई । करहु भरत पद प्रीति सुहाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Hear our advice, O king of gods! A devotee is supremely dear to Śrī Rāma; He is gratified through service rendered to His devotees, and bears great enmity to those who are hostile to them. Even though the Lord is alike to all without either love or anger and receives neither sin nor virtue, neither merit nor demerit, and even though He has made Fate the ruling factor in this world, so that one reaps what one sows, yet according as

---

taken his meals. He was, therefore, in a fix and consulted learned Brahmans on the point. The Brahmans advised the king to observe the formality of breaking his fast by sipping a spoonful of water in which the feet of the Lord's image had been immersed. By doing so he would not be guilty of dining before the invitee and would also be saved from the offence of not breaking his fast during the Dwādaśī. No sooner had the king sipped the holy water than the sage returned from the river bank and flew into a rage when he learnt that the king had broken his fast and did not await his return. He pulled out a hair from his head and produced therefrom a demoness known by the name of Kṛtyā, which ran to devour the king. Ambarīṣa, who had dedicated himself to the feet of the Lord, and absolutely depended on Him, remained standing where he was and neither shrank out of fear nor made any attempt to save himself.

The Lord, however, would not allow his devotee to die without any fault of his and despatched His own discus, Sudarsana, to save his life. The discus ran after the demoness and having disposed of her pursued the sage himself, who ran for his life and wandered throughout the universe for full one year; but none afforded him shelter. Even Bhagavān Viṣṇu pleaded His helplessness and asked him to approacl the king himself and ask for his forgiveness. The king, who was too good to harbour any ill-will against the sage and out of sympathy for him had remained without any food ever since he left, was moved to pity at his predicament and prayed to the Lord's weapon, Sudarśana, to spare the Brahman. Sudarśana granted the king's prayer and left. The sage, who now realized the king's greatness, fell at his feet and craved for his forgiveness for what he had done. The king in his turn felt sorry for the hardships which the sage had to suffer on his account and bade him good-bye after entertaining him to a sumptuous dinner and showing him every respect.

one possesses the heart of a devotee or an unbeliever He appears to be impartial or hostile in His dealings. Though devoid of attributes, unattached, free from pride and ever unchanged, Śrī Rāma has assumed a form with attributes yielding to the love of His devotees. Śrī Rāma has ever respected the wishes of His devotees: the Vedas and Purāṇas as well as saints and gods can bear testimony to this. Bearing this in mind give up perversity and cherish ideal love for Bharata's feet. (1—4)

दो०—राम भगत परहित निरत पर दुख दुखी दयाल ।
भगत सिरोमनि भरत तें जनि डरपहु सुरपाल ॥ २१९ ॥

"Śrī Rāma's devotees are actively engaged in doing good to others, share the sorrows of others and are compassionate by nature. And Bharata is the very crest-jewel of devotees; therefore, be not afraid of him, O ruler of gods. (219)

चौ०—सत्यसंध प्रभु सुर हितकारी । भरत राम आयस अनुसारी ॥
स्वारथ बिबस बिकल तुम्ह होहू । भरत दोसु नहिं राउर मोहू ॥ १ ॥
सुनि सुरबर सुरगुर बर बानी । भा प्रमोदु मन मिटी गलानी ॥
बरषि प्रसून हरषि सुरराऊ । लगे सराहन भरत सुभाऊ ॥ २ ॥
एहि बिधि भरत चले मग जाहीं । दसा देखि मुनि सिद्ध सिहाहीं ॥
जबहिं रामु कहि लेहिं उसासा । उमगत पेमु मनहुँ चहु पासा ॥ ३ ॥
द्रवहिं बचन सुनि कुलिस पषाना । पुरजन पेमु न जाइ बखाना ॥
बीच बास करि जमुनहिं आए । निरखि नीरु लोचन जल छाए ॥ ४ ॥

"The Lord is true to His word and a friend of the gods, while Bharata obeys Śrī Rāma's orders. You are feeling uneasy only because you are dominated by self-interest. Bharata is not to blame at all; it is your ignorance (which is responsible for your uneasiness)." The chief of gods, Indra, was overjoyed at heart to hear these valuable words of the heavenly preceptor and his depression of spirit was gone. The lord of celestials, therefore, rained down flowers and gladly began to extol Bharata's noble disposition. In this way Bharata went on his way, while sages and Siddhas were filled with envy at the sight of his condition. Whenever he heaved a long sigh with the word 'Rāma' on his lips, it seemed as if love overflowed on all sides. Even adamant and stones melted at his words; the love of the citizens was beyond description. Halting at one place on this side the party arrived on the bank of the Yamunā and Bharata's eyes were filled with tears as he gazed on its dark water (which reminded him of Śrī Rāma's swarthy form). (1—4)

दो०—रघुबर बरन बिलोकि बर बारि समेत समाज ।
होत मगन बारिधि बिरह चढ़े बिबेक जहाज ॥ २२० ॥

At the sight of the lovely stream that possessed the same hue as the person of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line) Bharata and his party were plunged into an ocean of grief on account of separation from Śrī Rāma and were saved from drowning only by boarding the bark of discretion. (220)

चौ०—जमुन तीर तेहि दिन करि बासू। भयउ समय सम सबहि सुपासू॥
रातिहिं घाट घाट की तरनी। आईं अगनित जाहिं न बरनी॥ १॥
प्रात पार भए एकहि खेवाँ। तोषे रामसखा की सेवाँ॥
चले नहाइ नदिहि सिर नाई। साथ निषादनाथ दोउ भाई॥ २॥
आगें मुनिबर बाहन आछें। राजसमाज जाइ सबु पाछें॥
तेहि पाछें दोउ बंधु पयादें। भूषन बसन बेष सुठि सादें॥ ३॥
सेवक सुहृद सचिवसुत साथा। सुमिरत लखनु सीय रघुनाथा॥
जहँ जहँ राम बास बिश्रामा। तहँ तहँ करहिं सप्रेम प्रनामा॥ ४॥

That day they halted on the bank of the Yamunā; everyone was provided with comforts according to the occasion. In course of the night innumerable boats of untold varieties came from all the ghats. At daybreak the whole party crossed the river in a single trip; everyone was pleased with the services rendered by the Niṣāda chief in this behalf. After performing their ablutions and bowing their heads to the river (Yamunā) the two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) resumed their journey with the lord of Niṣādas. At the head of the line in chosen vehicles travelled the principal sages (Vāmadeva, Vasiṣṭha and so on), followed by the royal host. Next followed the two royal brothers, both on foot; their ornaments, costumes and style of dress were all of the very simplest. They were accompanied by their servants, friends and the minister's son and went with their thoughts fixed on Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and the Lord of Raghus. They lovingly saluted each and every place where Śrī Rāma had either encamped or rested awhile. (1—4)

दो०—मगबासी नर नारि सुनि धाम काम तजि धाइ।
देखि सरूप सनेह सब मुदित जनम फलु पाइ॥ २२१॥

Hearing the news the men and women who lived by the roadside left their household work and ran after the royal travellers, and having seen their comely form and affection they all rejoiced on attaining the reward of their life. (221)

चौ०—कहहिं सपेम एक एक पाहीं। रामु लखनु सखि होहिं कि नाहीं॥
बय बपु बरन रूपु सोइ आली। सीलु सनेहु सरिस सम चाली॥ १॥
बेषु न सो सखि सीय न संगा। आगें अनी चली चतुरंगा॥
नहिं प्रसन्न मुख मानस खेदा। सखि संदेहु होइ एहिं भेदा॥ २॥
तासु तरक तियगन मन मानी। कहहिं सकल तेहि सम न सयानी॥
तेहि सराहि बानी फुरि पूजी। बोली मधुर बचन तिय दूजी॥ ३॥
कहि सपेम सब कथाप्रसंगू। जेहि बिधि राम राज रस भंगू॥
भरतहि बहुरि सराहन लागी। सील सनेह सुभाय सुभागी॥ ४॥

One woman lovingly said to another, "Friend, can they be Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa or not? Their age, constitution, complexion and comeliness of form are the same, dear companion; their amiability and affection are also similar and their gait too resembles that of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. Only their dress is not the

same and they are not accompanied by Sītā, my friend; and an army complete in its four limbs (viz., horse and foot, elephants and chariots) is marching before them. Moreover, they do not wear a cheerful countenance and their heart is heavy with sorrow. This difference makes me doubt their identity with Rāma and Lakṣmana, O friend." Her argument appealed to the rest of the women; they said, "There is none so clever as she." Applauding the latter and admiring the truth of her remarks another woman spoke in sweet accents. She lovingly narrated the whole episode as to how the festivities in connection with Śrī Rāma's installation had been obstructed. She then began to praise Bharata's amiability, affection, genial disposition and good-luck.

(1—4)

दो०—चलत पयादें खात फल पिता दीन्ह तजि राजु ।
जात मनावन रघुबरहि भरत सरिस को आजु ॥ २२२ ॥

"Journeying on foot, living on fruits and relinquishing the sovereignty bestowed by his father, Bharata is proceeding to persuade the Chief of Raghu's line to return. Who can equal Bharata today?" (222)

चौ०—भायप भगति भरत आचरनू । कहत सुनत दुख दूषन हरनू ॥
जो किछु कहब थोर सखि सोई । राम बंधु अस काहे न होई ॥ १ ॥
हम सब सानुज भरतहि देखें । भइन्ह धन्य जुबती जन लेखें ॥
सुनि गुन देखि दसा पछिताहीं । कैकइ जननि जोगु सुतु नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
कोउ कह दूषनु रानिहि नाहिन । बिधि सबु कीन्ह हमहि जो दाहिन ॥
कहँ हम लोक बेद बिधि हीनी । लघु तिय कुल करतूति मलीनी ॥ ३ ॥
बसहिं कुदेस कुगावँ कुबामा । कहँ यह दरसु पुन्य परिनामा ॥
अस अनंदु अचिरिजु प्रति ग्रामा । जनु मरुभूमि कलपतरु जामा ॥ ४ ॥

"Bharata's brotherly affection, devotion and conduct dispel the woes and evils of those who talk or hear of them. Whatever may be said with regard to them, dear friend, will be quite inadequate; it is no wonder that a brother of Rama should be like that. All of us who have seen Bharata and his younger brother have become praiseworthy among women." Hearing of his virtues and seeing his forlorn state they lamented, "Surely he is not a fit son for such a vile mother as Kaikeyī." Some one said, "The queen-mother (Kaikeyī) is not to blame at all; all this has been accomplished by God, who is so favourably disposed to us. Of what account are we, vile women, excluded both from secular and Vedic rites and impure by birth as well as by doings, who dwell in an accursed region (woodland) and in a wretched village and are the worst of our class, that we should have such a sight, which is a reward of great religious merit?" There was a similar rejoicing and wonder in every village: it seemed as if a celestial tree had sprung up in a desert.

(1—4)

दो०—भरत दरसु देखत खुलेउ मग लोगन्ह कर भागु ।
जनु सिंघलबासिन्ह भयउ बिधि बस सुलभ प्रयागु ॥ २२३ ॥

At the sight of Bharata the good fortune of the people by the roadside manifested itself as though by the will of Providence Prayāga had been brought within easy reach of the people of Siṁhala (Ceylon). (223)

चौ०—निज गुन सहित राम गुन गाथा । सुनत जाहिं सुमिरत रघुनाथा ॥
तीरथ मुनि आश्रम सुरधामा । निरखि निमज्जहिं करहिं प्रनामा ॥ १ ॥
मनहीं मन मागहिं बरु एहू । सीय राम पद पदुम सनेहू ॥
मिलहिं किरात कोल बनबासी । बैखानस बटु जती उदासी ॥ २ ॥
करि प्रनामु पूँछहिं जेहि तेही । केहि बन लखनु रामु बैदेही ॥
ते प्रभु समाचार सब कहहीं । भरतहि देखि जनम फलु लहहीं ॥ ३ ॥
जे जन कहहिं कुसल हम देखे । ते प्रिय राम लखन सम लेखे ॥
एहि बिधि बूझत सबहि सुबानी । सुनत राम बनबास कहानी ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing his own praises as well as of Śrī Rāma's virtues Bharata went on his way, thinking of Śrī Rāma. Whenever he happened to see holy waters he bathed in them and whenever he caught sight of a hermitage or a temple he made obeisance to it, asking in his heart only one boon, viz., devotion to the lotus feet of Sītā and Rāma. Whomsoever he met, be he a Kol or any other forester or even if he were an anchorite, a religious student, a recluse or a hermit, he would salute him and enquire in which part of the forest were Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma and Videha's daughter (Sītā). They told him all the news of the Lord and at the sight of Bharata obtained the reward of their life. Those persons who said they had seen the Lord doing well were counted as dear as Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa themselves. Thus in polite phrases he would make enquiries from all and hear the story of Śrī Rāma's forest life. (1—4)

दो०—तेहि बासर बसि प्रातहीं चले सुमिरि रघुनाथ ।
राम दरस की लालसा भरत सरिस सब साथ ॥ २२४ ॥

Halting that day in a suitable place he resumed his journey early next morning invoking the Lord of Raghus. Just like Bharata every one who accompanied him longed for a sight of Śrī Rāma. (224)

चौ०—मंगल सगुन होहिं सब काहू । फरकहिं सुखद बिलोचन बाहू ॥
भरतहि सहित समाज उछाहू । मिलिहहिं रामु मिटिहि दुख दाहू ॥ १ ॥
करत मनोरथ जस जियँ जाके । जाहिं सनेह सुराँ सब छाके ॥
सिथिल अंग पग मग डगि डोलहिं । बिहबल बचन पेम बस बोलहिं ॥ २ ॥
रामसखाँ तेहि समय देखावा । सैल सिरोमनि सहज सुहावा ॥
जासु समीप सरित पय तीरा । सीय समेत बसहिं दोउ बीरा ॥ ३ ॥
देखि करहिं सब दंड प्रनामा । कहि जय जानकि जीवन रामा ॥
प्रेम मगन अस राजसमाजू । जनु फिरि अवध चले रघुराजू ॥ ४ ॥

Auspicious omens occurred to everyone; they had happy throbbings in their eyes and arms. Bharata and his whole host rejoiced at the thought that they would be able to see Śrī Rāma and the sting of their sorrows

would come to an end. Each indulged in his own fancy and all went intoxicated with the wine of love; their limbs were getting out of control, their legs tottered and they spoke words in an incoherent way due to emotion. Śrī Rāma's friend (Guha) presently pointed to Bharata the crest-jewel of mountains (Kāmadagiri), which was naturally charming and in the vicinity of which on the bank of the river Payaswinī dwelt the two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) along with Sītā. Catching sight of the mountain all fell prostrate on the ground with the cries of "Glory to Śrī Rāma, the life of Janaka's daughter !" The royal host was so overwhelmed with emotion as though the Chief of Raghu's line had turned back towards Ayodhya. (1—4)

दो०—भरत प्रेमु तेहि समय जस तस कहि सकइ न सेषु ।
कबिहि अगम जिमि ब्रह्मसुखु अह मम मलिन जनेषु ॥ २२५ ॥

Bharata's love at that time was more than Śeṣa (the thousand-headed serpent-king) could describe. It is as unapproachable to the poet as the bliss of absorption into Brahma to those who are tainted by egotism and mineness. (225)

चौ०—सकल सनेह सिथिल रघुबर कें । गए कोस दुइ दिनकर ढरकें ॥
जलु थलु देखि बसे निसि बीतें । कीन्ह गवन रघुनाथ पिरीतें ॥ १ ॥
उहाँ रामु रजनी अवसेषा । जागे सीयँ सपन अस देखा ॥
सहित समाज भरत जनु आए । नाथ बियोग ताप तन ताए ॥ २ ॥
सकल मलिन मन दीन दुखारी । देखीं सासु आन अनुहारी ॥
सुनि सिय सपन भरे जल लोचन । भए सोचबस सोच बिमोचन ॥ ३ ॥
लखन सपन यह नीक न होई । कठिन कुचाह सुनाइहि कोई ॥
अस कहि बंधु समेत नहाने । पूजि पुरारि साधु सनमाने ॥ ४ ॥

Being all overpowered by love for the Chief of Raghu's line they had covered a distance of only four miles by the time the sun set. Perceiving a suitable site and water close by they halted and at the close of night the beloved of Śrī Rāma resumed his journey. There Śrī Rāma awoke while it was yet dark. Sītā saw in a dream that very night as if Bharata had come with his retinue and that his body was tormented by the agony of separation from his lord. All who had accompanied him were sad at heart, miserable and afflicted; while Her mothers-in-law She found changed in appearance. On hearing of Sītā's dream Śrī Rāma's eyes filled with tears and He who rids others of their sorrow became sorrowful. "This dream, Lakṣmaṇa, bodes no good; somebody will break terribly bad news." Saying so He took His bath with His brother and worshipping the Enemy of Tripura, Lord Śiva, paid His respects to holy men. (1—4)

छं०—सनमानि सुर मुनि बंदि बैठे उतर दिसि देखत भए ।
नभ धूरि खग मृग भूरि भागे बिकल प्रभु आश्रम गए ॥
तुलसी उठे अवलोकि कारनु काह चित सचकित रहे ।
सब समाचार किरात कोलन्हि आइ तेहि अवसर कहे ॥

After adoring the gods and reverencing the hermits He sat down gazing to the north. There was dust in the air and a host of birds and beasts had taken to flight in panic and were making their way to the Lord's hermitage. Says Tulasīdāsa: He stood up when He saw this and wondered in his heart what could be the reason. Presently the Kols and Kirātas came and told Him all the news.

सो०—सुनत सुमंगल बैन मन प्रमोद तन पुलक भर।
सरद सरोरुह नैन तुलसी भरे सनेह जल ॥ २२६ ॥

When He heard the delightful words He felt overjoyed at heart. A thrill ran through His body and His eyes, that resembled the autumnal lotus, says Tulasīdāsa, filled with the tears of affection. (226)

चौ०—बहुरि सोचबस भे सियरवनू। कारन कवन भरत आगवनू ॥
एक आइ अस कहा बहोरी। सेन संग चतुरंग न थोरी ॥ १ ॥
सो सुनि रामहि भा अति सोचू। इत पितु बच इत बंधु सकोचू ॥
भरत सुभाउ समुझि मन माहीं। प्रभु चित हित थिति पावत नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
समाधान तब भा यह जाने। भरतु कहे महुँ साधु सयाने ॥
लखन लखेउ प्रभु हृदयँ खभारू। कहत समय सम नीति बिचारू ॥ ३ ॥
बिनु पूछें कछु कहउँ गोसाईं। सेवकु समयँ न ढीठ ढिठाईं ॥
तुम्ह सर्बग्य सिरोमनि स्वामी। आपनि समुझि कहउँ अनुगामी ॥ ४ ॥

Sīta's lord became anxious the very next moment. "What can be the reason of Bharata's arrival?" Then somebody came and spoke to Him thus: "He has with him no small army complete in its four limbs (viz., foot, horse, elephants and chariots)." Hearing this Śrī Rāma felt much disturbed. On the one hand there was His father's command, on the other His regard for His younger brother (Bharata). Realizing Bharata's disposition in His heart, the Lord found no proposition to fix His mind upon. Then He consoled Himself with the thought that Bharata was submissive, good and reasonable. Lakṣmana saw that the Lord was troubled at heart, and spoke what prudence demanded on the occasion. "I make bold, my lord, to say something unasked; but a servant ceases to be impertinent if his impertinence is not inopportune. You, my master, are the crest-jewel of the all-wise; yet I, your servant, tell you my own mind. (1—4)

दो०—नाथ सुहृद सुठि सरल चित सील सनेह निधान।
सब पर प्रीति प्रतीति जियँ जानिअ आपु समान ॥ २२७ ॥

"You, my master, are loving by nature and guileless of heart and a storehouse of amiability and affection. You love and trust everyone and know all to be just like yourself. (227)

चौ०—बिषई जीव पाइ प्रभुताई। मूढ़ मोह बस होहिं जनाई ॥
भरतु नीति रत साधु सुजाना। प्रभु पद प्रेमु सकल जगु जाना ॥ १ ॥
तेऊ आजु राम पदु पाई। चले धरम मरजाद मेटाई ॥
कुटिल कुबंधु कुअवसरु ताकी। जानि राम बनबास एकाकी ॥ २ ॥

करि कुमंत्रु मन साजि समाजू । आए करै अकंटक राजू ॥
कोटि प्रकार कलपि कुटिलाई । आए दल बटोरि दोउ भाई ॥ ३ ॥
जौं जियँ होति न कपट कुचाली । केहि सोहाति रथ बाजि गजाली ॥
भरतहि दोसु देइ को जाएँ । जग बौराइ राज पदु पाएँ ॥ ४ ॥

"Fools given to the pleasures of sense are seized with infatuation on attaining power and reveal their true nature. Bharata was righteous, good and wise and his devotion to the Lord's feet is known to the whole world. But now that he has attained Śrī Rāma's (your) position (as the ruler of Ayodhyā) even he has transgressed the bounds of righteousness. Finding an adverse situation and knowing that you are alone in the forest, this wily and wicked brother has plotted an evil design and after making due preparations has come to make his sovereignty secure. Planning all sorts of wicked schemes the two brothers have collected an army and marched here. If they had no wily intention and roguery at heart, who should like to bring chariots, horses and elephants? But why should one blame Bharata for nothing when we know that anyone in the world would be driven mad on attaining sovereignty? (1—4)

दो०—ससि गुर तिय गामी नघुषु चढ़ेउ भूमिसुर जान ।
लोक बेद तें बिमुख भा अधम न बेन समान ॥ २२८ ॥

"The moon-god committed adultery with the wife of his Guru (the sage Bṛhaspati), while Nahuṣa mounted a palanquin borne by Brahmans; and there was none so vile as King Vena,* an enemy of established usage as well as of the Vedic injunctions. (228)

चौ०—सहसबाहु सुरनाथु त्रिसंकू । केहि न राजमद दीन्ह कलंकू ॥
भरत कीन्ह यह उचित उपाऊ । रिपु रिन रंच न राखब काऊ ॥ १ ॥
एक कीन्हि नहिं भरत भलाई । निदरे रामु जानि असहाई ॥
समुझि परिहि सोउ आजु बिसेषी । समर सरोष राम मुखु पेखी ॥ २ ॥

* Vena was born of King Anga (a descendant of the celebrated devotee Dhruva), and Sunithā (a daughter of Mṛtyu, the god of death). Being thus descended from Adharma (the spirit presiding over unrighteousness, the father of Mṛtyu) on the mother's side, Vena was born with vicious propensities and grew to be the bane of society. Fed up with his atrocities and unable to correct him, King Anga left his capital one night and retired to an unknown destination. Seeing the kingdom masterless Bhṛgu and other sages installed Vena on the throne, even though the ministers were opposed to his installation. Power turned his head all the more and arrogantly accounting himself as greater than all he began to insult exalted souls. He went the length of banning the performance of sacrifices and even charity and thus put a stop to all pious acts and the pursuit of religion.

When the sages perceived that the tyranny of the monarch was overstepping all bounds they felt sorry for having installed him on the throne. They, therefore, met and decided to expostulate with the king and persuade him, if possible, to desist from his evil ways. They further resolved to dispose of him in case he did not come round. The sages approached the king accordingly and admonished him but in vain. This enraged the sages, who killed him by the very sound of 'Hum'.

एतना कहत नीति रस भूला । रन रस बिटपु पुलक मिस फूला ॥
प्रभु पद बंदि सीस रज राखी । बोले सत्य सहज बलु भाषी ॥ ३ ॥
अनुचित नाथ न मानब मोरा । भरत हमहि उपचार न थोरा ॥
कहँ लगि सहिअ रहिअ मनु मारें । नाथ साथ धनु हाथ हमारें ॥ ४ ॥

"King Sahasrabāhu, Indra (the lord of celestials) and King Triśanku* (father of Hariśchandra)—which of these was not brought into disrepute by the intoxication of kingly power ? Bharata has resorted to a right expedient; for one should leave no trace of one's enemy or debt in any case. But he has made one mistake in that he has despised Srī Rāma (yourself) as forlorn. And he will realize his mistake with vengeance today when he beholds Śrī Rāma's (your) indignant face on the battle-field." Even as he said so he forgot his love of propriety and the tree of his bellicose spirit burst into flowers in the shape of horripilation. Adoring the Lord's feet and placing their dust on his head he spoke, revealing his own real and natural might "Pray do not take offence, my lord, if I tell you that Bharata has provoked me not a little. After all how long shall I endure this and restrain my passion when my lord (yourself) is with me and the bow in my hand ? (1—4)

दो०—छत्रि जाति रघुकुल जनमु राम अनुग जगु जान ।
लातहुँ मारें चढ़ति सिर नीच को धूरि समान ॥ २२९ ॥

"A Ksatriya (warrior) by caste and born in the race of Raghu I am known throughout the world as a servant of Srī Rāma (yourself). (How, then, can I put up with such insult ?) What is so low as the dust (on a road) ? But if you were to kick it up it would rise to your head." (229)

चौ०—उठि कर जोरि रजायसु मागा । मनहुँ बीर रस सोवत जागा ॥
बाँधि जटा सिर कसि कटि भाथा । साजि सरासनु सायकु हाथा ॥ १ ॥

* Triśanku, son of Trayyāruṇi, was a king of Ayodhyā. He wanted to perform a sacrifice whereby he could bodily ascend to heaven. His priest Vasiṣṭha, however, refused to conduct such a sacrifice, which he said was unauthorized and futile. Vasiṣṭha's sons too declined on the same grounds. But Triśanku turned a deaf ear to their remonstrances. This enraged Vasiṣṭha's sons, who cursed him that he should fall in the social scale and be accounted a pariah. The king was thus converted into a Chāndāla and was accordingly forsaken by his kinsmen, ministers and subjects too. Much agitated at heart over this, the ex-king now approached the sage Viśwāmitra, who comforted him; and asking his sons to invite other sages he conducted the sacrifice. Vasiṣṭha's sons, however, ruled that at a sacrifice commenced by a pariah and conducted by a non-Brahman priest (for such was Viśwamitra till then) no gods would appear. The gods respected this ruling and accordingly no god appeared to accept the offerings. By dint of his own penance Viśwamitra sent Triśanku to heaven; but the gods hurled him down. Exasperated at this Viśwamitra proceeded to create another heaven and began to shape new heavenly bodies. The gods were dismayed at this and sought a conference with Viśwāmitra. It was ultimately decided by mutual agreement that Viśwamitra should abandon his plan to create a new heaven and Trisanku should remain hanging in the air. He is still seen in the form of a triple luminary in the heavens. The saliva that dropped from his mouth forms the river Karmanāśā, which flows between Banaras and Bihar and the water of which is considered as ever polluted.

आजु राम सेवक जसु लेऊँ । भरतहि समर सिखावन देऊँ ॥
राम निरादर कर फलु पाई । सोवहुँ समर सेज दोउ भाई ॥ २ ॥
आइ बना भल सकल समाजू । प्रगट करउँ रिस पाछिल आजू ॥
जिमि करि निकर दलइ मृगराजू । लेइ लपेटि लवा जिमि बाजू ॥ ३ ॥
तैसेहिं भरतहि सेन समेता । सानुज निदरि निपातउँ खेता ॥
जौं सहाय कर संकरु आई । तौ मारउँ रन राम दोहाई ॥ ४ ॥

As he rose and with joined palms asked leave (to meet Bharata in an encounter), it seemed as if the heroic sentiment itself had awoke from sleep. Binding up the matted locks on his head and fastening the quiver to his waist he strung his bow and took an arrow in his hand. "Let me distinguish myself as a servant of Śrī Rāma today and teach Bharata a lesson in the battle. Reaping the fruit of their contempt for Śrī Rāma let the two brothers sleep on the couch of the battle-field. It is well that the whole host has collected at one place; I shall, therefore, give vent to my past anger. Even as a lion (the king of beasts) tears to pieces a herd of elephants or just as a hawk clutches and carries off a lark, so shall I lightly overthrow on the field Bharata as well as his younger brother (Śatrughna) and all their host. Even if Lord Śankara comes to his aid, I swear by Śrī Rama that I will kill him in battle." (1–4)

दो०—अति सरोष माखे लखनु लखि सुनि सपथ प्रवान ।
सभय लोक सब लोकपति चाहत भभरि भगान ॥ २३० ॥

Seeing Lakṣmaṇa speak with such vehemence and fury and hearing his solemn oath all the spheres trembled with fear, while their rulers were anxious to flee away in panic. (230)

चौ०—जगु भय मगन गगन भइ बानी । लखन बाहुबलु बिपुल बखानी ॥
तात प्रताप प्रभाउ तुम्हारा । को कहि सकइ को जाननिहारा ॥ १ ॥
अनुचित उचित काजु किछु होऊ । समुझि करिअ भल कह सबु कोऊ ॥
सहसा करि पाछें पछिताहीं । कहहिं बेद बुध ते बुध नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
सुनि सुर बचन लखन सकुचाने । राम सीयँ सादर सनमाने ॥
कही तात तुम्ह नीति सुहाई । सब तें कठिन राजमदु भाई ॥ ३ ॥
जो अचवँत नृप मातहिं तेई । नाहिन साधुसभा जेहिं सेई ॥
सुनहु लखन भल भरत सरीसा । बिधि प्रपंच महँ सुना न दीसा ॥ ४ ॥

The world was seized with terror and a voice was heard in the air extolling the enormous strength of Lakṣmaṇa's arm: "Who can tell, dear child, nay, who even knows your might and glory? But before doing anything one must judge whether it is right or wrong; then everyone would approve of it. They who act impulsively and repent afterwards are anything but wise: so declare the Vedas and the sages." On hearing this voice from heaven Lakṣmaṇa felt abashed; but both Śrī Rāma and Sītā addressed him kindly and politely:

"What you have said, dear Lakṣmaṇa, is sound wisdom; the intoxication of kingly power is the worst of all. But of those rulers who have tasted it they alone lose their head who have never waited on an assembly of saints. As for Bharata, I tell you, Lakṣmaṇa, in the whole of God's creation I have never seen or heard of anyone so good as he. (1—4)

दो०—भरतहि होइ न राजमदु विधि हरि हर पद पाइ।
कबहुँ कि काँजी सीकरनि छीरसिंधु बिनसाइ ॥ २३१ ॥

"Bharata would never be intoxicated with sovereign power even if he attained to the position of Brahmā, Viṣṇu or Śiva. What! Can a few drops of Kānjī * ever split the ocean of milk? (231)

चौ०—तिमिरु तरुन तरनिहि मकु गिलई। गगनु मगन मकु मेघहिं मिलई ॥
गोपद जल बूड़हिं घटजोनी। सहज छमा बरु छाड़ै छोनी ॥ १ ॥
मसक फूँक मकु मेरु उड़ाई। होइ न नृपमदु भरतहि भाई ॥
लखन तुम्हार सपथ पितु आना। सुचि सुबंधु नहिं भरत समाना ॥ २ ॥
सगुनु खीरु अवगुन जलु ताना। मिलइ रचइ परपंचु बिधाता ॥
भरत हंस रबिबंस तड़ागा। जनमि कीन्ह गुन दोष बिभागा ॥ ३ ॥
गहि गुन पय तजि अवगुन बारी। निज जस जगत कीन्हि उजिआरी ॥
कहत भरत गुन सीलु सुभाऊ। पेम पयोधि मगन रघुराऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"Darkness may swallow the midday sun, and sooner may the heavens be absorbed into a cloud or the jar-born sage Agastya (who is stated to have drunk off the ocean in a single draught) be drowned in the water collected in a cow's footprint; nay the earth may abandon its natural forbearance and Mount Meru be blown away by a puff of wind discharged from the mouth of a mosquito; but Bharata will never be intoxicated by kingly power, O brother. Lakṣmaṇa, I swear by you as well as by our father that there is no brother so good and innocent as Bharata. God, dear brother, creates the world by mixing the milk of goodness with the water of evil; while Bharata is a swan, born in the lake of the solar race, that has sifted goodness from evil. Choosing the milk of goodness and discarding the water of evil he has illumined the world by his glory." Even as the Lord of Raghus extolled Bharata's virtues, amiability and noble disposition He was drowned in an ocean of love. (1—4)

दो०—सुनि रघुबर बानी बिबुध देखि भरत पर हेतु।
सकल सराहत राम सो प्रभु को कृपानिकेतु ॥ २३२ ॥

On hearing the speech of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line) and seeing His affection for Bharata all the gods were full of applause and said, "Can you name such a gracious lord as Śrī Rāma? (232)

---

* A sour and savoury drink prepared by dissolving powdered rye seeds into water and preserving it for a few days.

चौ०—जौं न होत जग जनम भरत को । सकल धरम धुर धरनि धरत को ॥
कबि कुल अगम भरत गुन गाथा । को जानइ तुम्ह बिनु रघुनाथा ॥ १ ॥
लखन राम सियँ सुनि सुर बानी । अति सुखु लहेउ न जाइ बखानी ॥
इहाँ भरतु सब सहित सहाए । मंदाकिनीं पुनीत नहाए ॥ २ ॥
सरित समीप राखि सब लोगा । मागि मातु गुर सचिव नियोगा ॥
चले भरतु जहँ सिय रघुराई । साथ निषादनाथु लघु भाई ॥ ३ ॥
समुझि मातु करतब सकुचाहीं । करत कुतरक कोटि मन माहीं ॥
रामु लखनु सिय सुनि मम नाऊँ । उठि जनि अनत जाहिं तजि ठाऊँ ॥ ४ ॥

"Had Bharata not been born into the world, who on this earth would have championed the cause of virtue in its entirety? Who else than you, O Lord of Raghus, can know Bharata's good qualities, which are unapproachable even to the race of bards?" On hearing the words of the gods, Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma and Sītā were more delighted than words can tell. There Bharata with all his host bathed in the sacred Mandākinī. Then, leaving all the people on the riverside and taking permission of his mothers, preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha) and the minister (Sumantra) he proceeded to the spot where Sītā and Śrī Rāma were, taking the Niṣāda chief and his younger brother (Śatrughna) with him. As he thought of what his mother had done, he felt diffident and formed ill-conjectures of every kind in his mind: "God forbid that Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā leave the place on hearing my name and shift to some other place !

(1—4)

दो०—मातु मते महुँ मानि मोहि जो कछु करहिं सो थोर ।
अघ अवगुन छमि आदरहिं समुझि आपनी ओर ॥ २३३ ॥

"Taking me to be an accomplice of my mother, nothing that he might do would be too much. But looking to his own self, I am sure, he will forgive my faults and receive me kindly.

(233)

चौ०—जौं परिहरहिं मलिन मनु जानी । जौं सनमानहिं सेवकु मानी ॥
मोरें सरन रामहि की पनही । राम सुस्वामि दोसु सब जनही ॥ १ ॥
जग जस भाजन चातक मीना । नेम पेम निज निपुन नबीना ॥
अस मन गुनत चले मग जाता । सकुच सनेहँ सिथिल सब गाता ॥ २ ॥
फेरति मनहुँ मातु कृत खोरी । चलत भगति बल धीरज धोरी ॥
जब समुझत रघुनाथ सुभाऊ । तब पथ परत उताइल पाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
भरत दसा तेहि अवसर कैसी । जल प्रबाहँ जल अलि गति जैसी ॥
देखि भरत कर सोचु सनेहू । भा निषाद तेहि समयँ बिदेहू ॥ ४ ॥

"Whether He shuns me as one possessing a black heart or welcomes me as his own servant, my only refuge are Śrī Rāma's shoes; he is really a noble master while the whole blame lies with his servant (myself). The only beings deserving of fame in the world are the Chātaka bird and the fish, who are clever in keeping ever fresh their vow of fidelity and love,"

Revolving these thoughts in his mind he went on his journey, his whole body rendered powerless by diffidence and affection. The sinful act of his mother (Kaikeyī) dragged him back as it were; while the strength of his devotion pressed him forward, foremost among the resolute as he was. Whenever he thought of Śrī Rāma's good nature his feet moved quickly along the way. Bharata's gait at that time resembled the movements of a water-fly carried along a stream. Seeing Bharata's anxiety and affection at that moment the Niṣāda chief forgot all about himself. (1–4)

दो०—लगे होन मंगल सगुन सुनि गुनि कहत निषादु ।
मिटिहि सोचु होइहि हरषु पुनि परिनाम बिषादु ॥ २३४ ॥

Auspicious omens occurred and the Niṣāda chief after hearing of and reflecting on them said, "Anxiety will pass away giving place to delight; but in the end there will be sorrow." (234)

चौ०—सेवक बचन सत्य सब जाने । आश्रम निकट जाइ निअराने ॥
भरत दीख बन सैल समाजू । मुदित छुधित जनु पाइ सुनाजू ॥ १ ॥
ईति भीति जनु प्रजा दुखारी । त्रिबिध ताप पीड़ित ग्रह मारी ॥
जाइ सुराज सुदेस सुखारी । होहिं भरत गति तेहि अनुहारी ॥ २ ॥
राम बास बन संपति भ्राजा । सुखी प्रजा जनु पाइ सुराजा ॥
सचिव बिरागु बिबेकु नरेसू । बिपिन सुहावन पावन देसू ॥ ३ ॥
भट जम नियम सैल रजधानी । सांति सुमति सुचि सुंदर रानी ॥
सकल अंग संपन्न सुराऊ । राम चरन आश्रित चित चाऊ ॥ ४ ॥

Bharata knew every word of his servant (Guha) to be true; and proceeding further he drew near to the hermitage. When he saw the forest and the mountain range, he was as glad as a hungry man on getting excellent food. Just as a people tormented by the fear of calamities* and afflicted by threefold troubles as well as by the influence of evil stars and by pestilence feel happy on migrating to a well-governed and prosperous country, Bharata too had similar feelings. The natural wealth of the forest grew while Śrī Rāma lived there, even as the people rejoice on securing a good king. The charming forest was the sacred realm referred to here; Discretion was the king (who ruled over it), while Dispassion was his counsellor. Likewise the five Yamas† and the five Niyamas‡ constituted the champions of the realm. Mount

---

* Public calamities or visitations of God (*Itis* as they are technically called) are reckoned as six in number, viz., excessive rain, drought, rats, locusts, parrots and invasion by some neighbouring king.

अतिवृष्टिरनावृष्टिर्मूषकाः शलभाः शुकाः । प्रत्यासन्नाश्च राजानः षडेता ईतयः स्मृताः ॥

† The five forms of self-restraint or Yamas as they are called in Yoga Philosophy are: Ahiṃsā (non-violence in thought, word and deed), Satya (truthfulness), Brahmacharya (abstinence from sexual indulgence in every form), Aparigraha (depriving oneself of all possessions) and Asteya (non-stealing).

‡ The five Niyamas or religious observances are: Śaucha (external and internal purity), Santoṣa (contentment), Tapas (religious austerity), Swādhyāya (study and recitation of the Vedas and muttering or chanting of the Divine Name) and Iśwara-Praṇidhāna (self-surrender to and meditation on God).

Chitrakūṭa stood for its capital, while Peace and Good Understanding represented the virtuous and lovely queens. In this way the good king was complete in all the limbs* of a good state; and depending as he did on Śrī Rāma's feet his heart was full of zeal. (1—4)

दो०--जीति मोह महिपालु दल सहित बिबेक भुआलु ।
करत अकंटक राजु पुरँ सुख संपदा सुकालु ॥ २३५ ॥

Having conquered King Delusion with all his host King Discretion held undisputed sway in his capital; and joy, prosperity and plenty reigned everywhere. (235)

चौ०—बन प्रदेस मुनि बास घनेरे । जनु पुर नगर गाउँ गन खेरे ॥
बिपुल बिचित्र बिहग मृग नाना । प्रजा समाजु न जाइ बखाना ॥ १ ॥
खगहा करि हरि बाघ बराहा । देखि महिष बृष साजु सराहा ॥
बयरु बिहाइ चरहिं एक संगा । जहँ तहँ मनहुँ सेन चतुरंगा ॥ २ ॥
झरना झरहिं मत्त गज गाजहिं । मनहुँ निसान बिबिधि बिधि बाजहिं ॥
चक चकोर चातक सुक पिक गन । कूजत मंजु मराल मुदित मन ॥ ३ ॥
अलिगन गावत नाचत मोरा । जनु सुराज मंगल चहु ओरा ॥
बेलि बिटप तृन सफल सफूला । सब समाजु मुद मंगल मूला ॥ ४ ॥

The numerous hermits' habitations in the forest region were like so many towns, cities, villages and hamlets (comprising the king's dominion). The many birds of various colours and the beasts of different varieties constituted his countless subjects. The hares, elephants, lions, tigers, boars, buffaloes and bulls presented a sight which attracted admiration. Shedding their natural animosities they roamed about together like an army complete in all its four limbs. Rills of water flowed and mad elephants trumpeted; their noise resembled the beating of kettle-drums of various kinds. Chakrawākas, Chakoras, Chātakas, parrots and cuckoos and swans made delightful and merry concert. Swarms of bees hummed and peacocks danced, which showed as it were that there was universal rejoicing in that prosperous kingdom. Creepers, trees and blades of grass alike were blossoming and bore fruit; the entire community thus wore a festive and delightful appearance. (1—4)

दो०--राम सैल सोभा निरखि भरत हृदयँ अति पेमु ।
तापस तप फलु पाइ जिमि सुखी सिरानें नेमु ॥ २३६ ॥

Beholding the beauty of Śrī Rāma's hill (Chitrakūṭa) Bharata's heart overflowed with love even as an ascetic who has reaped the fruit of his penance rejoices on the completion of his vow. (236)

[PAUSE 20 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

[PAUSE 5 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

* Every good state must have the following seven limbs:—a sovereign, a minister, allies, a treasury, a principality or dominion, a fortress and an army.

चौ०—तब केवट ऊँचें चढ़ि धाई। कहेउ भरत सन भुजा उठाई ॥
नाथ देखिअहिं बिटप बिसाला। पाकरि जंबु रसाल तमाला ॥ १ ॥
जिन्ह तरुबरन्ह मध्य बटु सोहा। मंजु बिसाल देखि मनु मोहा ॥
नील सघन पल्लव फल लाला। अबिरल छाहँ सुखद सब काला ॥ २ ॥
मानहुँ तिमिर अरुनमय रासी। बिरची बिधि सँकेलि सुषमा सी ॥
ए तरु सरित समीप गोसाँई। रघुबर परनकुटी जहँ छाई ॥ ३ ॥
तुलसी तरुबर बिबिध सुहाए। कहुँ कहुँ सियँ कहुँ लखन लगाए ॥
बट छायाँ बेदिका बनाई। सियँ निज पानि सरोज सुहाई ॥ ४ ॥

In the meantime the Niṣāda chief ran and climbed up an eminence, and lifting his arm, exclaimed to Bharata; "My lord, look at those huge and noble trees of Pākar (the citron-leaved Indian fig tree), Jambū (the black plum), mango and Tamāla, in the midst of which stands out a beautiful and stately banyan, which is so charming to behold with its dark and dense foliage, red fruit and unbroken shade, which is pleasant throughout the year, as if God had brought together all that was exquisitely beautiful and given it the shape of a dark and rosy mass. The trees in question, my lord, stand close to the riverside where the Chief of Raghus has erected His hut of leaves. In front of it you will find a variety of charming basil shrubs planted here by Sītā and there by Lakṣmaṇa. And in the shade of the banyan tree there is a lovely altar raised by Sītā with Her own lotus hands,— (1–4)

दो०—जहाँ बैठि मुनिगन सहित नित सिय रामु सुजान ।
सुनहिं कथा इतिहास सब आगम निगम पुरान ॥ २३७ ॥

"—Seated whereon the all-wise Sītā and Rāma listen every day, in the midst of a crowd of hermits, to all kinds of stories and legends from the Āgamas (Tantras), Vedas and Puranas." (237)

चौ०—सखा बचन सुनि बिटप निहारी। उमगे भरत बिलोचन बारी ॥
करत प्रनाम चले दोउ भाई। कहत प्रीति सारद सकुचाई ॥ १ ॥
हरषहिं निरखि राम पद अंका। मानहुँ पारसु पायउ रंका ॥
रज सिर धरि हियँ नयनन्हि लावहिं। रघुबर मिलन सरिस सुख पावहिं ॥ २ ॥
देखि भरत गति अकथ अतीवा। प्रेम मगन मृग खग जड़ जीवा ॥
सखहि सनेह बिबस मग भूला। कहि सुपंथ सुर बरषहिं फूला ॥ ३ ॥
निरखि सिद्ध साधक अनुरागे। सहज सनेहु सराहन लागे ॥
होत न भूतल भाउ भरत को। अचर सचर चर अचर करत को ॥ ४ ॥

The moment Bharata heard the words of his friend (Guha) and saw the trees tears rushed to his eyes. The two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) made obeisance as they proceeded; even Śāradā (the goddess of speech) felt diffident in describing their love (for Śrī Rāma). They were as delighted to behold Śrī Rāma's footprints as a pauper who had stumbled on a

philosopher's stone. Placing the dust on their head and heart they applied it to their eyes and experienced the same degree of joy as they would on seeing the Chief of Raghus Himself. Perceiving Bharata's condition, which was altogether beyond description, beasts and birds and even inanimate creatures (such as trees etc.) were overwhelmed with emotion. Over-powered by love Bharata's friend (Guha) lost his way; but the gods showed it to him and rained flowers. God-realized saints as well as striving souls were filled with love at his very sight and began to praise his natural affection. If Bharata had not been born on this globe (or if the earth had not witnessed his love) it would not have been possible to turn inanimate into animate and animate into inanimate beings. (1—4)

दो०—पेम अमिअ मंदरु बिरहु भरतु पयोधि गँभीर ।
मथि प्रगटेउ सुर साधु हित कृपासिंधु रघुबीर ॥ २३८ ॥

For the sake of gods in the form of saints the all-compassionate Hero of Raghu's line extracted this nectar of love by churning the unfathomable depths of Bharata's soul; and it was separation from Him which stood for Mount Mandara (that served as a churning-stick).* (238)

चौ०—सखा समेत मनोहर जोटा । लखेउ न लखन सघन बन ओटा ॥
भरत दीख प्रभु आश्रमु पावन । सकल सुमंगल सदनु सुहावन ॥ १ ॥
करत प्रबेस मिटे दुख दावा । जनु जोगीं परमारथु पावा ॥
देखे भरत लखन प्रभु आगे । पूँछे बचन कहत अनुरागे ॥ २ ॥
सीस जटा कटि मुनि पट बाँधें । तून कसें कर सरु धनु काँधें ॥
बेदी पर मुनि साधु समाजू । सीय सहित राजत रघुराजू ॥ ३ ॥
बलकल बसन जटिल तनु स्यामा । जनु मुनिबेष कीन्ह रति कामा ॥
कर कमलनि धनु सायकु फेरत । जिय की जरनि हरत हँसि हेरत ॥ ४ ॥

The two charming brothers and their friend (Guha) could not be seen by Lakṣmaṇa, screened as they were by a dense thicket. Bharata, however, saw the holy and lovely hermitage of his lord, which was an abode of all fair blessings. Even as he entered it his woe and affliction disappeared; it seemed as though a Yogī (mystic) had realized the supreme truth. Bharata saw Lakṣmaṇa standing before the Lord and affectionately answering His queries. He wore matted hair on his head and had a hermit's robe girt about his loins. Besides there was a quiver fastened to his waist and he bore an arrow in his hand and a bow slung across his shoulder. On the altar in the midst of an assembly of hermits and holy men shone Sītā and the Lord of Raghus, who was clad in the bark of trees and had matted hair on His head and a swarthy complexion; it seemed as though Rati and the god of love had appeared there in hermit's garb. He was revolving His bow and arrow between His lotus hands and would dispel by one smiling glance the anguish of one's soul. (1—4)

* The metaphor has been taken from the Puranic story of Amṛta-Manthana.

दो०—लसत मंजु मुनि मंडली मध्य सीय रघुचंदु।
ग्यान सभाँ जनु तनु धरें भगति सच्चिदानंदु ॥ २३९ ॥

In the midst of a charming ring of hermits Sītā and the Moon of Raghu's race shone forth like Devotion and the Supreme Spirit (who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss combined) incarnated as it were in a circle of wisdom. (239)

चौ०—सानुज सखा समेत मगन मन। बिसरे हरष सोक सुख दुख गन ॥
पाहि नाथ कहि पाहि गोसाईं। भूतल परे लकुट की नाईं ॥ १ ॥
बचन सपेम लखन पहिचाने। करत प्रनामु भरत जियँ जाने ॥
बंधु सनेह सरस एहि ओरा। उत साहिब सेवा बस जोरा ॥ २ ॥
मिलि न जाइ नहिं गुदरत बनई। सुकबि लखन मन की गति भनई ॥
रहे राखि सेवा पर भारू। चढ़ी चंग जनु खैंच खेलारू ॥ ३ ॥
कहत सप्रेम नाइ महि माथा। भरत प्रनाम करत रघुनाथा ॥
उठे रामु सुनि पेम अधीरा। कहुँ पट कहुँ निषंग धनु तीरा ॥ ४ ॥

Bharata as well as his younger brother (Śatrughna) and friend (Guha) were so enraptured that their joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, were all forgotten. Uttering the words "Protect me, my lord; save me, my master" he fell flat on the ground like a log. Lakṣmaṇa recognized his loving speech and concluded in his mind that it was Bharata making obeisance.* On the one hand there was the loving affection of an elder brother (Bharata), while, on the other, there was the stronger claim of service to his master. He was, therefore, neither able to meet his brother (Bharata) nor ignore him; some good poet alone could describe Lakṣmaṇa's state of mind. He threw his whole weight on the side of service and remained where he was, even as a kite-flier would pull against a kite that has risen high in the air. Bowing his head to the ground he lovingly said, "Bharata is making obeisance to you, O Lord of Raghus." Overwhelmed with emotion Śrī Rāma started up as soon as He heard this, His robe flying in one direction, and His quiver and bow and arrows in another. (1—4)

दो०—बरबस लिए उठाइ उर लाए कृपानिधान।
भरत राम की मिलनि लखि बिसरे सबहि अपान ॥ २४० ॥

The all-compassionate Lord forcibly lifted Bharata and clasped him to His bosom. Everyone who witnessed the meeting of Bharata and Śrī Rāma lost all self-consciousness. (240)

चौ०—मिलनि प्रीति किमि जाइ बखानी। कबिकुल अगम करम मन बानी ॥
परम पेम पूरन दोउ भाई। मन बुधि चित अहमिति बिसराई ॥ १ ॥
कहहु सुपेम प्रगट को करई। केहि छाया कबि मति अनुसरई ॥
कबिहि अरथ आखर* बलु साँचा। अनुहरि ताल गतिहि नटु नाचा ॥ २ ॥

* Since Bharata had fallen prostrate behind his back Lakṣmaṇa, who was loth to divert his mind from Śrī Rāma's service, could not see him; hence he could only infer his identity from his voice.

अगम सनेह भरत रघुबर को । जहँ न जाइ मनु बिधि हरि हर को ॥
सो मैं कुमति कहौं केहि भाँती । बाज सुराग कि गाँडर ताँती ॥ ३ ॥
मिलनि बिलोकि भरत रघुबर की । सुरगन सभय धकधकी धरकी ॥
समुझाए सुरगुरु जड़ जागे । बरषि प्रसून प्रसंसन लागे ॥ ४ ॥

How can the affectionate meeting be described? It was unapproachable to the poet in thought, word and deed alike. The two brothers overflowed with supreme affection; their mind, reason, intellect and ego were all lost. Tell me, who can portray such noble love? By what shadow will the poet's mind seek to attain to it? The poet's solid strength lies in the theme to be worked on and the expression he uses; a dancer regulates his movements according to the cadence of the accompanying music. Unapproachable is the affection of Bharata and the Chief of Raghu's line, which is beyond the conception of Brahmā (the Creator), Hari (the Protector) and Hara (the Destroyer of the universe). How, then, can I describe it, dull-witted as I am? Can an instrument strung with a chord made of a species of grass known by the name of *Gandar* produce good music? When the gods witnessed the meeting of Bharata and the Chief of Raghu's line they were alarmed and their heart began to palpitate. The dull fellows were disillusioned only when their preceptor (the sage Bṛhaspati) admonished them; and now they rained flowers and gave shouts of applause. (1—4)

दो०—मिलि सपेम रिपुसूदनहि केवटु भेँटेउ राम ।
भूरि भायँ भेँटे भरत लछिमन करत प्रनाम ॥ २४१ ॥

After fondly embracing Ripusūdana (Śatrughna) Śrī Rāma met the Niṣāda chief. Even so with profuse love Bharata embraced Lakṣmaṇa while the latter was greeting him. (241)

चौ०—भेँटेउ लखन ललकि लघु भाई । बहुरि निषादु लीन्ह उर लाई ॥
पुनि मुनिगन दुहुँ भाइन्ह बंदे । अभिमत आसिष पाइ अनंदे ॥ १ ॥
सानुज भरत उमगि अनुरागा । धरि सिर सिय पद पदुम परागा ॥
पुनि पुनि करत प्रनाम उठाए । सिर कर कमल परसि बैठाए ॥ २ ॥
सीयँ असीस दीन्हि मन माहीं । मगन सनेहँ देह सुधि नाहीं ॥
सब बिधि सानुकूल लखि सीता । भे निसोच उर अपडर बीता ॥ ३ ॥
कोउ किछु कहइ न कोउ किछु पूँछा । प्रेम भरा मन निज गति छूँछा ॥
तेहि अवसर केवटु धीरजु धरि । जोरि पानि बिनवत प्रनामु करि ॥ ४ ॥

Likewise Lakṣmaṇa eagerly met his younger brother (Śatrughna) and next clasped the Niṣāda chief to his bosom. Then the two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) greeted the host of hermits and were delighted to receive blessings to their liking. In a rapture of love Bharata and his younger brother (Śatrughna) placed on their head the dust of Sītā's lotus feet and made obeisance to Her again and again; while She lifted them each time and stroking their head with Her lotus hand made them sit down. Sītā blessed them in Her heart; She was so overwhelmed with love that She lost all consciousness of Her body. When they found Sītā propitious in every way, they

became free from anxiety and the imaginary fears of their heart were gone. No one uttered a word nor asked any question; the mind was so full of love that it had stopped its activity. Presently the Niṣāda chief collected himself and bowing his head submitted with joined palms: (1–4)

दो०—नाथ साथ मुनिनाथ के मातु सकल पुर लोग ।
सेवक सेनप सचिव सब आए बिकल बियोग ॥ २४२ ॥

"Stricken with grief due to separation from you, my lord, all your mothers, the people of the city, servants, generals and ministers, all have come along with the lord of sages, Vasiṣṭha." (242)

चौ०—सीलसिंधु सुनि गुर आगवनू । सिय समीप राखे रिपुदवनू ॥
चले सबेग रामु तेहि काला । धीर धरम धुर दीनदयाला ॥ १ ॥
गुरहि देखि सानुज अनुरागे । दंड प्रनाम करन प्रभु लागे ॥
मुनिबर धाइ लिए उर लाई । प्रेम उमगि भेंटे दोउ भाई ॥ २ ॥
प्रेम पुलकि केवट कहि नामू । कीन्ह दूरि तें दंड प्रनामू ॥
रामसखा रिषि बरबस भेंटा । जनु महि लुठत सनेह समेटा ॥ ३ ॥
रघुपति भगति सुमंगल मूला । नभ सराहि सुर बरिसहिं फूला ॥
एहि सम निपट नीच कोउ नाहीं । बड़ बसिष्ठ सम को जग माहीं ॥ ४ ॥

When the Ocean of amiability, Śrī Rāma, learnt that His preceptor had come, He left Ripudamana (Śatrughna) by Sītā's side and the All-merciful proceeded at once with quick steps, a champion of virtue and self-possessed that He was. On seeing the Guru both the Lord and His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) were overwhelmed with affection and prostrated themselves on the ground. The chief of sages, however, ran and clasped them to his bosom; he received them with a heart overflowing with love. Thrilling all over with emotion and mentioning his name the Niṣāda chief too fell prostrate on the ground at a respectable distance. The sage, however, forcibly embraced him as a friend of Śrī Rāma; it seemed as though he had gathered up love lying scattered on the ground. "Devotion to the Lord of Raghus is the root of all choice blessings!" With these words of praise the gods in heaven rained flowers. "There is no one so utterly vile as this man; and who is so great as Vasiṣṭha in this world? (1–4)

दो०—जेहि लखि लखनहु तें अधिक मिले मुदित मुनिराउ ।
सो सीतापति भजन को प्रगट प्रताप प्रभाउ ॥ २४३ ॥

"Yet on seeing him the king of sages embraced him with greater joy than he did Lakṣmaṇa. Such is the palpable glory and effect of adoring Sītā's lord!" (243)

चौ०—आरत लोग राम सबु जाना । करुनाकर सुजान भगवाना ॥
जो जेहि भायँ रहा अभिलाषी । तेहि तेहि कै तसि तसि रुख राखी ॥ १ ॥

सानुज मिलि पल महुँ सब काहू । कीन्ह दूरि दुखु दारुन दाहू ॥
यह बड़ि बात राम कै नाहीं । जिमि घट कोटि एक रबि छाहीं ॥ २ ॥
मिलि केवटहि उमगि अनुरागा । पुरजन सकल सराहहिं भागा ॥
देखीं राम दुखित महतारीं । जनु सुबेलि अवलीं हिम मारीं ॥ ३ ॥
प्रथम राम भेंटी कैकेई । सरल सुभायँ भगति मति भेई ॥
पग परि कीन्ह प्रबोधु बहोरी । काल करम बिधि सिर धरि खोरी ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma, the all-compassionate and all-wise Lord, found all the people restless; and therefore, meeting the wish of everyone according to the sentiment each cherished in his heart, He and His younger brother met them all in an instant and relieved their distress and terrible agony. This was no great achievement for Śrī Rāma: the sun would as well cast its reflection in millions of jars (full of water) simultaneously. All the citizens met the Niṣāda chief with a heart overflowing with love and praised his good fortune. Śrī Rāma found all His mothers as stricken with grief as a row of tender creepers that had been smitten by frost. First of all He met Kaikeyī, and softened her mind by His guileless disposition and devotion. He fell at her feet and then soothed her attributing the blame to the wheel of time, destiny and Providence. (1—4)

दो०—भेटीं रघुबर मातु सब करि प्रबोधु परितोषु ।
अंब ईस आधीन जगु काहु न देइअ दोषु ॥ २४४ ॥

The Chief of Raghu's line thereafter met all His mothers and consoled them by exhorting them in the following words: "Mother, the world is controlled by the will of God; no one should, therefore, be blamed." (244)

चौ०—गुरतिय पद बंदे दुहु भाईं । सहित बिप्रतिय जे सँग आईं ॥
गंग गौरि सम सब सनमानीं । देहिं असीस मुदित मृदु बानीं ॥ १ ॥
गहि पद लगे सुमित्रा अंका । जनु भेंटी संपति अति रंका ॥
पुनि जननी चरननि दोउ भ्राता । परे पेम ब्याकुल सब गाता ॥ २ ॥
अति अनुराग अंब उर लाए । नयन सनेह सलिल अन्हवाए ॥
तेहि अवसर कर हरष बिषादू । किमि कबि कहै मूक जिमि स्वादू ॥ ३ ॥
मिलि जननिहि सानुज रघुराऊ । गुर सन कहेउ कि धारिअ पाऊ ॥
पुरजन पाइ मुनीस नियोगू । जल थल तकि तकि उतरेउ लोगू ॥ ४ ॥

The two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) then adored the feet of their preceptor's wife (Arundhatī) as well as of all those Brahman ladies who had accompanied her, paying them all the same honour as is due to the holy Gaṅgā and Goddess Gaurī (Śiva's Consort); while the ladies gladly blessed them in soft accents. After clasping Sumitrā's feet they sought her lap even as an abject pauper would hug a treasure. Both the brothers now fell at the feet of mother Kausalyā, all their limbs overwrought by love. The mother most fondly clasped them to her bosom and bathed them with tears of affection. How can any poet describe the joy and grief of the occasion any

more than a dumb man the taste of what he has eaten. After meeting their mother the Lord of Raghus and His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) requested their Guru to accompany them. And on receiving the sage's command the citizens encamped themselves wherever they saw a suitable site and water close by. (1—4)

दो०—महिसुर मंत्री मातु गुर गने लोग लिए साथ।
पावन आश्रम गवनु किय भरत लखन रघुनाथ॥ २४५॥

Taking with them a few chosen people, viz., the Brahmans, the ministers, the queen-mothers and the preceptor, Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and the Lord of Raghus proceeded to the holy hermitage. (245)

चौ०—सीय आइ मुनिबर पग लागी। उचित असीस लही मन मागी॥
गुरपतिनिहि मुनितियन्ह समेता। मिली पेमु कहि जाइ न जेता॥ १॥
बंदि बंदि पग सिय सबही के। आसिरबचन लहे प्रिय जी के॥
सासु सकल जब सीयँ निहारीं। मूदे नयन सहमि सुकुमारीं॥ २॥
परीं बधिक बस मनहुँ मरालीं। काह कीन्ह करतार कुचालीं॥
तिन्ह सिय निरखि निपट दुखु पावा। सो सबु सहिअ जो दैउ सहावा॥ ३॥
जनकसुता तब उर धरि धीरा। नील नलिन लोयन भरि नीरा॥
मिली सकल सासुन्ह सिय जाई। तेहि अवसर करुना महि छाई॥ ४॥

Sītā came and threw Herself at the feet of Vasiṣṭha (the chief of sages) and received suitable blessings solicited by Her mind. The affectionate manner in which She met the Guru's wife (Arundhatī) and the wives of other hermits was beyond description. Adoring the feet of all one by one Sītā received blessings dear to Her heart. When Sītā saw all Her mothers-in-law the tender girl closed Her eyes in dismay. They appeared to Her like so many female swans fallen into the hands of some fowler. "What has a mischievous Providence done!" She said to Herself. They too were sore distressed when they gazed on Sītā. "We must bear all that Fate imposes on us," they thought. Janaka's Daughter then took courage in Her heart and with Her dark lotus eyes filled with tears She approached and embraced all Her mothers-in-law. Earth was enveloped in pathos at the moment. (1—4)

दो०—लागि लागि पग सबनि सिय भेंटति अति अनुराग।
हृदयँ असीसहिं पेम बस रहिअहु भरी सोहाग॥ २४६॥

Throwing Herself at the feet of all by turns Sītā greeted them with utmost love. Overwhelmed with emotion they blessed Her in their heart: "May you continue to enjoy a happy wifehood!" (246)

चौ०—बिकल सनेहँ सीय सब रानीं। बैठन सबहि कहेउ गुर ग्यानीं॥
कहि जग गति मायिक मुनिनाथा। कहे कछुक परमारथ गाथा॥ १॥

नृप कर सुरपुर गवनु सुनावा । सुनि रघुनाथ दुसह दुखु पावा ॥
मरन हेतु निज नेहु बिचारी । भे अति बिकल धीर धुर धारी ॥ २ ॥
कुलिस कठोर सुनत कटु बानी । बिलपत लखन सीय सब रानी ॥
सोक बिकल अति सकल समाजू । मानहुँ राजु अकाजेउ आजू ॥ ३ ॥
मुनिबर बहुरि राम समुझाए । सहित समाज सुसरित नहाए ॥
ब्रतु निरंबु तेहि दिन प्रभु कीन्हा । मुनिहु कहें जलु काहुँ न लीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

Finding Sītā and all the queen-mothers shaken with emotion the wise Guru bade them all sit down. Declaring the nature of the world to be illusory the lord of sages gave them some discourse on spiritual matters. He then announced the king's departure to heaven and the Lord of Raghus was deeply pained to hear of it. Thinking the king had died on account of love for Him the firmest of the firm was much agitated. Hearing the unpalatable news, which was cruel as the thunderbolt, Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and all the queens broke out into lamentations. Nay, the whole assembly was sore stricken with grief as though the king had died that very day. The chief of sages then comforted Śrī Rāma, who with all those present there bathed in the heavenly stream. The Lord fasted that day abstaining even from water. And even though persuaded by the sage none else took a drop of water either. (1—4)

दो०—भोरु भएँ रघुनंदनहि जो मुनि आयसु दीन्ह ।
श्रद्धा भगति समेत प्रभु सो सबु सादरु कीन्ह ॥ २४७ ॥

At daybreak the Lord reverently and devoutly did all that the sage bade the Delighter of Raghus do. (247)

चौ०—करि पितु क्रिया बेद जसि बरनी । भे पुनीत पातक तम तरनी ॥
जासु नाम पावक अघ तूला । सुमिरत सकल सुमंगल मूला ॥ १ ॥
सुद्ध सो भयउ साधु संमत अस । तीरथ आवाहन सुरसरि जस ॥
सुद्ध भएँ दुइ बासर बीते । बोले गुर सन राम पिरीते ॥ २ ॥
नाथ लोग सब निपट दुखारी । कंद मूल फल अंबु अहारी ॥
सानुज भरतु सचिव सब माता । देखि मोहि पल जिमि जुग जाता ॥ ३ ॥
सब समेत पुर धारिअ पाऊ । आपु इहाँ अमरावति राऊ ॥
बहुत कहेउँ सब कियउँ ढिठाई । उचित होइ तस करिअ गोसाँई ॥ ४ ॥

Having performed His father's obsequies as prescribed in the Vedas the Lord, who was a sun as it were to the darkness of sins, became pure again. The Lord whose Name Itself is a fire to the cotton of sins and whose very thought is the root of all choice blessings, attained purity even as the heavenly stream is consecrated by invoking into it other sacred waters*: such

* The Gangā, which is pure in itself, is consecrated only in name by invoking other sacred waters into it; on the other hand, it lends purity to the waters that are invoked into it. Even so the Lord, who is all-pure, attained purity in the eyes of the world by performing certain religious rites; while, as a matter of fact, the rites themselves were consecrated from the time they were performed by the Lord.

is the verdict of holy men. When two days elapsed after the purification, Śrī Rāma affectionately said to the Guru: "My lord, all the people are sore distressed, living as they do on bulbs, roots, fruits and water alone. When I behold Bharata and his younger brother (Śatrughna), the ministers and all my mothers, every minute that passes seems an age to me. Therefore, pray return to the city with all; for you are here and the king (my father) is in heaven (there is no one to look after the city). I have said too much and all this amounts to gross presumption on my part. Now, my lord, do what is proper." (1—4)

दो०—धर्म सेतु करुनायतन कस न कहहु अस राम।
लोग दुखित दिन दुइ दरस देखि लहहुँ बिश्राम ॥ २४८ ॥

"It is no wonder, Rāma, that you should speak like this, a bulwark of righteousness and a home of compassion that you are. But grieved as the people are, let them derive solace by enjoying your sight for a couple of days." (248)

चौ०—राम बचन सुनि सभय समाजू। जनु जलनिधि महुँ बिकल जहाजू ॥
सुनि गुर गिरा सुमंगल मूला। भयउ मनहुँ मारुत अनुकूला ॥ १ ॥
पावन पयँ तिहुँ काल नहाहीं। जो बिलोकि अघ ओघ नसाहीं ॥
मंगलमूरति लोचन भरि भरि। निरखहिं हरषि दंडवत करि करि ॥ २ ॥
राम सैल बन देखन जाहीं। जहँ सुख सकल सकल दुख नाहीं ॥
झरना झरहिं सुधासम बारी। त्रिबिध ताप हर त्रिबिध बयारी ॥ ३ ॥
बिटप बेलि तृन अगनित जाती। फल प्रसून पल्लव बहु भाँती ॥
सुंदर सिला सुखद तरु छाहीं। जाइ बरनि बन छबि केहि पाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

At the words of Śrī Rāma the assembly trembled with fear like a ship tossed on the ocean. When, however, they heard the auspicious words of the Guru, it seemed as though the wind had turned in their favour. Thrice in the day (in the morning, at noon and in the evening) they bathed in the holy Payaswinī river, the very sight of which wipes out hosts of sins, ever feasting their eyes on Śrī Rāma, the incarnation of blessedness, and gladly prostrating themselves before Him again and again. They went out to see the hill and woods hallowed by the presence of Śrī Rāma, where reigned joy of every kind and which was free from all sorrows. Water sweet as nectar flowed from springs; while soft, cool and fragrant breezes soothed every pain of mind and body. Trees, creepers and grasses of infinite variety; fruits, flowers and leaves of many kinds; beautiful slabs of stone and the delightful shade of trees: the splendour of the forest was beyond description. (1—4)

दो०—सरनि सरोरुह जल बिहग कूजत गुंजत भृंग।
बैर बिगत बिहरत बिपिन मृग बिहंग बहुरंग ॥ २४९ ॥

Lotuses adorned the lakes, waterfowls cooed and bees hummed; while birds and beasts of various colours roamed about in the forest free from animosities. (249)

चौ०—कोल किरात भिल्ल बनबासी । मधु सुचि सुंदर स्वादु सुधा सी ॥
भरि भरि परन पुटीं रचि रूरी । कंद मूल फल अंकुर जूरी ॥ १ ॥
सबहि देहिं करि बिनय प्रनामा । कहि कहि स्वाद भेद गुन नामा ॥
देहिं लोग बहु मोल न लेहीं । फेरत राम दोहाई देहीं ॥ २ ॥
कहहिं सनेह मगन मृदु बानी । मानत साधु पेम पहिचानी ॥
तुम्ह सुकृती हम नीच निषादा । पावा दरसनु राम प्रसादा ॥ ३ ॥
हमहि अगम अति दरसु तुम्हारा । जस मरु धरनि देवधुनि धारा ॥
राम कृपाल निषाद नेवाजा । परिजन प्रजउ चहिअ जस राजा ॥ ४ ॥

The Kols, Kirātas, Bhils and other dwellers of the forest prepared lovely bowls of leaves and filling them with honey, pure, fine and delicious as nectar, presented them with small bundles of bulbs, roots, fruits and sprouts to all the newcomers with humble submission and salutations, severally mentioning the taste, species, virtue and name of each. The people offered a liberal price; but the foresters would not accept it and returned it adjuring them by Śrī Rāma's love to take it back. Overwhelmed with emotion they submitted in gentle tones: "The good respect true love once they have come to recognize it. You are all virtuous souls, while we are vile Niṣādas; it is through Rāma's grace that we have been blessed with your sight. You were utterly inaccessible to us even as the stream of the heavenly river (Gaṅgā) is to the desert land of Maru (Western Rajputana and Sind). The all-merciful Rāma has showered his grace on the Niṣāda chief; a king's kith and kin and subjects too should share his disposition. (1—4)

दो०—यह जियँ जानि सँकोचु तजि करिअ छोहु लखि नेहु ।
हमहि कृतारथ करन लगि फल तृन अंकुर लेहु ॥ २५० ॥

"Bearing this in mind shake off all scruple and recognizing our affection show your grace to us. And in order to oblige us do accept fruits, grass and shoots from us. (250)

चौ०—तुम्ह प्रिय पाहुने बन पगु धारे । सेवा जोगु न भाग हमारे ॥
देब काह हम तुम्हहि गोसाँई । ईंधनु पात किरात मिताई ॥ १ ॥
यह हमारि अति बड़ि सेवकाई । लेहिं न बासन बसन चोराई ॥
हम जड़ जीव जीव गन घाती । कुटिल कुचाली कुमति कुजाती ॥ २ ॥
पाप करत निसि बासर जाहीं । नहिं पट कटि नहिं पेट अघाहीं ॥
सपनेहुँ धरम बुद्धि कस काऊ । यह रघुनंदन दरस प्रभाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
जब तें प्रभु पद पदुम निहारे । मिटे दुसह दुख दोष हमारे ॥
बचन सुनत पुरजन अनुरागे । तिन्ह के भाग सराहन लागे ॥ ४ ॥

"You have come to this forest as our welcome guests; but we are not lucky enough to be fit for any service to you. What can we offer you, noble sirs? Fuel and leaves are the only tokens of a Kirāta's friendship; and our greatest service is that we do not steal and remove your utensils and

clothes. We are unfeeling creatures taking others' life, and are crooked by nature, wicked, evil-minded and low-born. Our days and nights are spent in sinful pursuits and yet we have no cloth to cover our loins and get no food enough to fill our belly. How could we possibly have ever dreamt of entertaining pious sentiments but for the virtue of having seen the Delighter of Raghus? Ever since we had the good fortune of gazing on our Lord's lotus feet our terrible woes and evils have disappeared." The citizens were overwhelmed with emotion to hear these words and began to extol the good fortune of those foresters. (1–4)

छं०—लागे सराहन भाग सब अनुराग बचन सुनावहीं ।
बोलनि मिलनि सिय राम चरन सनेहु लखि सुखु पावहीं ॥
नर नारि निदरहिं नेहु निज सुनि कोल भिल्लनि की गिरा ।
तुलसी कृपा रघुबंसमनि की लोह लै लौका तिरा ॥

All began to extol the good fortune of the foresters and addressed them in terms of endearment. Everyone rejoiced to hear their talk and behold their polite manners as well as their devotion to the feet of Sītā and Rāma. Men and women deprecated their own love when they heard the talk of the Kols and Bhils. It was through the grace of Śrī Rāma (the Jewel of Raghu's line), says Tulasīdāsa, that a block of iron floated with a boat loaded on it*.

सो०—बिहरहिं बन चहु ओर प्रति दिन प्रमुदित लोग सब ।
जल ज्यों दादुर मोर भए पीन पावस प्रथम ॥ २५१ ॥

Day after day all the people roamed through every quarter of the forest in great delight even like frogs and peacocks reinvigorated by the first shower of the rains. (251)

चौ०—पुर जन नारि मगन अति प्रीती । बासर जाहिं पलक सम बीती ॥
सीय सासु प्रति बेष बनाई । सादर करइ सरिस सेवकाई ॥ १ ॥
लखा न मरमु राम बिनु काहूँ । माया सब सिय माया माहूँ ॥
सीयँ सासु सेवा बस कीन्हीं । तिन्ह लहि सुख सिख आसिष दीन्हीं ॥ २ ॥
लखि सिय सहित सरल दोउ भाई । कुटिल रानि पछितानि अघाई ॥
अवनि जमहि जाचति कैकेई । महि न बीचु बिधि मीचु न देई ॥ ३ ॥

* Evidently the people of Ayodhyā, who were all deeply attached to Śrī Rāma and were highly virtuous souls, are here likened to a boat inasmuch as they were fit to carry any number of people through the ocean of metempsychosis to the feet of Śrī Rāma by their devotion. The Kols and Bhils, on the other hand, who represented the lowest strata of society and were low by birth as well as by conduct, are compared to a block of iron which cannot even float, much less carry any other weight on it. Through the grace of Śrī Rāma, however, the foresters put to shame the people of Ayodhyā by their artless devotion to Rāma and hence the metaphorical statement that a block of iron floated with a boat placed on it.

लोकहुँ बेद बिदित कबि कहहीं । राम बिमुख थलु नरक न लहहीं ॥
यहु संसउ सब के मन माहीं । राम गवनु बिधि अवध कि नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

The men and women of the city remained deeply immersed in love; days passed like a moment to them. Sītā, assuming as many forms as She had mothers-in-law, waited on each with equal attention. No one but Rāma knew the mystery behind it; for all delusive potencies form part of Sītā's delusive power. Sītā won over the queen-mothers by Her services, gratified by which they instructed and blessed Her. Perceiving the two brothers as well as Sītā straight in their dealings, the wicked queen bitterly repented. Kaikeyī sought help both from Earth and the god of death; but neither Earth afforded her shelter in her womb nor did God grant her death. It is well-known by popular tradition as well as through the Vedas, and the sages too declare, that those who are hostile to Rāma find no resting-place even in hell. The question that stirred every mind now was: "Good heavens, will Rāma return to Ayodhyā or not?"

(1—4)

दो०—निसि न नीद नहिं भूख दिन भरतु बिकल सुचि सोच ।
नीच कीच बिच मगन जस मीनहि सलिल सँकोच ॥ २५२ ॥

Bharata had no sleep by night nor appetite by day, perturbed as he was by a pious anxiety, even as a fish sunk in a shallow marsh is worried by paucity of water.

(252)

चौ०—कीन्हि मातु मिस काल कुचाली । ईति भीति जस पाकत साली ॥
केहि बिधि होइ राम अभिषेकू । मोहि अवकलत उपाउ न एकू ॥ १ ॥
अवसि फिरहिं गुर आयसु मानी । मुनि पुनि कहब राम रुचि जानी ॥
मातु कहेहुँ बहुरहिं रघुराऊ । राम जननि हठ करबि कि काऊ ॥ २ ॥
मोहि अनुचर कर केतिक बाता । तेहि महँ कुसमउ बाम बिधाता ॥
जौं हठ करउँ त निपट कुकरमू । हरगिरि तें गुरु सेवक धरमू ॥ ३ ॥
एकउ जुगुति न मन ठहरानी । सोचत भरतहि रैनि बिहानी ॥
प्रात नहाइ प्रभुहि सिर नाई । बैठत पठए रिषयँ बोलाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Disguised as my mother it was Fate that wrought this mischief, even as a crop of paddy ripening for the harvest may be visited by some pest. How can Śrī Rāma's coronation be accomplished? I can hit upon no device to secure this. He would certainly return in obedience to the Guru's commands; but the sage will ask Śrī Rāma to return only when he knows that the latter will like it. The Lord of Raghus would return even at the bidding of his mother; but will Śrī Rāma's mother ever insist on it? As for myself, I am only his vassal and as such count for nothing. On top of it I have fallen on evil days and Providence is against me. If I assert my own will, it would be a grievous sin; for the duty of a servant is more arduous than the lifting of Mount Kailāsa (Śiva's own Abode)." Bharata could not decide upon any one device and he spent the whole night in speculation. At daybreak he bathed, bowed his head to the Lord and was going to sit down beside Him when he was sent for by the sage (Vasiṣṭha).

(1—4)

दो०—गुर पद कमल प्रनामु करि बैठे आयसु पाइ ।
बिप्र महाजन सचिव सब जुरे सभासद आइ ॥ २५३ ॥

Bowing at the preceptor's lotus feet and receiving his permission, Bharata sat down; and presently the Brahmans, the elite of the city, the ministers and all other councillors came and assembled there. (253)

चौ०—बोले मुनिबरु समय समाना । सुनहु सभासद भरत सुजाना ॥
धरम धुरीन भानुकुल भानू । राजा रामु स्वबस भगवानू ॥ १ ॥
सत्यसंध पालक श्रुति सेतू । राम जनमु जग मंगल हेतू ॥
गुरु पितु मातु बचन अनुसारी । खल दलु दलन देव हितकारी ॥ २ ॥
नीति प्रीति परमारथ स्वारथु । कोउ न राम सम जान जथारथु ॥
बिधि हरि हरु ससि रबि दिसिपाला । माया जीव करम कुलि काला ॥ ३ ॥
अहिप महिप जहँ लगि प्रभुताई । जोग सिद्धि निगमागम गाई ॥
करि बिचार जियँ देखहु नीकें । राम रजाइ सीस सबही कें ॥ ४ ॥

The chief of the sages, Vasiṣṭha, spoke in words appropriate to the occasion, "Listen, O councillors, and you, wise Bharata: the sun of the solar race, King Rāma, is a champion of righteousness and the almighty Lord dependent on none but Himself. Śrī Rāma is true to His word and maintains the standard of morality set up by the Vedas; His very advent is a source of blessing to the world. Obedient to the commands of His preceptor and parents, He crushes the armies of the wicked and is a friend of the gods. Propriety of behaviour, love, the highest object of life and worldly interests—no one knows these aright as Rāma does. Brahmā (the Creator), Hari (the Preserver) and Hara (the Destroyer of the universe), the moon-god, the sun-god and the guardians of the various quarters, Māyā (the deluding potency of God), Jīva (the individual soul), the various forms of Karma (the residue of actions) and the Time-Spirit, Śeṣa (the lord of serpents), the rulers of the earth and whatever other powers there are and even so the accomplishments of Yoga extolled in the Vedas and other scriptures—ponder in your heart and consider well—Śrī Rāma's commands exercise their authority over all. (1—4)

दो०—राखें राम रजाइ रुख हम सब कर हित होइ ।
समुझि सयाने करहु अब सब मिलि संमत सोइ ॥ २५४ ॥

"If we carry out Śrī Rāma's orders and respect His wishes, it will be well for us all. Ponder this, O wise men; and do that which you all unanimously resolve upon. (254)

चौ०—सब कहुँ सुखद राम अभिषेकू । मंगल मोद मूल मग एकू ॥
केहि बिधि अवध चलहिं रघुराऊ । कहहु समुझि सोइ करिअ उपाऊ ॥ १ ॥
सब सादर सुनि मुनिबर बानी । नय परमारथ स्वारथ सानी ॥
उतरु न आव लोग भए भोरे । तब सिरु नाइ भरत कर जोरे ॥ २ ॥

भानुबंस भए भूप घनेरे । अधिक एक तें एक बड़ेरे ॥
जनम हेतु सब कहँ पितु माता । करम सुभासुभ देइ बिधाता ॥ ३ ॥
दलि दुख सजइ सकल कल्याना । अस असीस राउरि जगु जाना ॥
सो गोसाइँ बिधि गति जेहिं छेंकी । सकइ को टारि टेक जो टेकी ॥ ४ ॥

"Śrī Rāma's coronation will be delightful to all; that is the only course which is conducive to good luck and joy. In what way can the Lord of Raghus be prevailed upon to return to Ayodhyā: ponder this and tell me, so that we may adopt the same device." Everyone listened with reverence to the sage's speech, surcharged as it was with prudence and spiritual wisdom and salutary from the worldly point of view as well. But no answer was forthcoming: the people were dumbfounded. Then Bharata bowed his head and with joined palms began as follows: "The solar race has produced many a king each one far greater than the rest. For the birth of all the father and mother are responsible; whereas it is God who dispenses the good or evil fruit of their actions. Your benediction, as all the world knows, wipes out sorrow and confers all blessings. As for yourself, my lord, you thwarted the course of Providence*; no one can alter what you have resolved upon. (1—4)

---

* A few instances are quoted below to prove the truth of this statement:—

(1) King Daśaratha had no male issue. As a result of Vasiṣṭha's benediction he was blessed with four sons at the age of 60,000 years.

(2) The seventh Manu, Vaivaswata, had no son. The sage Vasiṣṭha caused a sacrifice to be performed by him. Manu's consort, Śraddhā, wished to have a daughter and accordingly requested the sacrificial priest (Hotā) to get her a daughter. The priest offered oblations with that motive and as a result of this a daughter, Ilā by name, was born to Śraddhā. Vaivaswata was taken aback to hear of this change and approached the sage with his grievance. Vasiṣṭha, who came to know the cause through meditation, consoled the Manu and assured him that he would fulfil his desire by dint of his penance. He prayed to the Lord and propitiated Him and secured a blessing from Him to the effect that the king's daughter would be transformed into a son. Ilā was accordingly changed into Sudyumna. One day, Sudyumna, who was now grown up into full manhood and was out for hunting, entered the precincts of a pleasure-grove at the foot of Mount Sumeru, reserved for Bhagavān Śiva and Goddess Pārvatī, and was retransformed into a woman under a standing curse pronounced by Śiva that any male who entered the grove would be changed into a woman. The moon-god's son, Budha, who had been practising austerity in the vicinity of that grove fell in love with the woman and she too was attracted towards him. The pair accordingly lived together as husband and wife. One day the princess invoked Vasiṣṭha, who appeared before her and was moved with pity to see her plight. He prayed to Lord Śiva and secured from him a boon to the effect that the prince would change his sex every month. He thus lived with Budha as his wife for one month and ruled over his kingdom as Sudyumna during another by rotation.

(3) Vasiṣṭha, who was a mind-born son of Brahmā, was called upon by his father to assume the role of a family priest in relation to the kings of the solar race. Finding him reluctant to accept this position, which was rather humiliating, Brahmā tried to persuade him by the argument that the Lord Himself would appear in that line in the Tretāyuga and that he would automatically secure the enviable position of the Lord's own family priest and preceptor and live on most intimate terms with Him. According to the order of sequence originally determined, Dwāpara (literally, the second Yuga) was to follow Satyayuga and Tretā (literally, the third Yuga) was to

दो०—बूझिअ मोहि उपाउ अब सो सब मोर अभागु ।
सुनि सनेहमय बचन गुर उर उमगा अनुरागु ॥ २५५ ॥

"And yet you ask advice of me at this juncture! All this is my misfortune." The Guru's heart overflowed with love when he heard these affectionate words. (255)

चौ०—तात बात फुरि राम कृपाहीं । राम बिमुख सिधि सपनेहुँ नाहीं ॥
सकुचउँ तात कहत एक बाता । अरध तजहिं बुध सरबस जाता ॥ १ ॥
तुम्ह कानन गवनहु दोउ भाई । फेरिअहिं लखन सीय रघुराई ॥
सुनि सुबचन हरषे दोउ भ्राता । भे प्रमोद परिपूरन गाता ॥ २ ॥
मन प्रसन्न तन तेजु बिराजा । जनु जिय राउ रामु भए राजा ॥
बहुत लाभ लोगन्ह लघु हानी । सम दुख सुख सब रोवहिं रानी ॥ ३ ॥
कहहिं भरतु मुनि कहा सो कीन्हे । फलु जग जीवन्ह अभिमत दीन्हे ॥
कानन करउँ जनम भरि बासू । एहि तें अधिक न मोर सुपासू ॥ ४ ॥

"What you have said is no doubt true, my child; but it is all due to Śrī Rāma's grace. He who is hostile to Rāma can never dream of success. I hesitate to tell you one thing: the wise forgo one-half when they find the whole in peril. You two brothers (Śatrughna and yourself) retire to the woods; while Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and the Lord of Raghus may be sent back." The two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) rejoiced to hear these agreeable words: their whole frame was filled with excess of joy. They were pleased at heart and a glow irradiated their body as though King Daśaratha had come to life again and Rāma had been crowned king. The people thought they would gain much while their loss would be comparatively small. The queen-mothers, however, all wept because their joy and sorrow matched each other. "By obeying the Guru's commands," Bharata observed, "one would attain the fruit of gratifying all the creatures of the world. I will stay all my life in the forest; I conceive no greater happiness than this. (1—4)

---

come next. Vasiṣṭha, however, was too impatient to wait for a couple of Yugas and accordingly changed their order of sequence. It was under His dispensation that Tretā followed Satyayuga and Dwāpara succeeded Tretā.

(4) The sage Viśwāmitra, who originally belonged to the Kṣatriya caste, practised austere penance for thousands of years with a view to attaining Brahmanhood. At last Brahmā recognized his claims to Brahmanhood and called him a Brahmarṣi (a Brahman sage). But Viśwāmitra would not be satisfied until Vasiṣṭha accepted him as such. In this way he attached a greater weight to Vasiṣṭha's opinion. Vasiṣṭha, however, declined to accept him as a Brahmarṣi till he retained even a tinge of egotism. He addressed him as a Brahmarṣi only when he was satisfied that Viśwāmitra had been purged of the last traces of egotism. Others, however, maintain that Vasiṣṭha did not recognize his claims to Brahmanhood till the last.

(5) During the nuptials of King Dilīpa and Sudakṣiṇā the ends of the garments of the bride and bridegroom were tied together most tightly. When Vasiṣṭha enquired the reason he was told that the pair would die the moment their knot was untied. The sage thereupon altered the course of destiny and averted their death.

दो०—अंतरजामी रामु सिय तुम्ह सरबग्य सुजान ।
जौं फुर कहहु त नाथ निज कीजिअ बचनु प्रवान ॥ २५६ ॥

"Rāma and Sītā have access to all hearts, while you are omniscient and wise. If what you say is true, then redeem your word, my lord." (256)

चौ०—भरत बचन सुनि देखि सनेहू । सभा सहित मुनि भए बिदेहू ॥
भरत महा महिमा जलरासी । मुनि मति ठाढ़ि तीर अबला सी ॥ १ ॥
गा चह पार जतनु हियँ हेरा । पावति नाव न बोहितु बेरा ॥
और करिहि को भरत बड़ाई । सरसी सीपि कि सिंधु समाई ॥ २ ॥
भरतु मुनिहि मन भीतर भाए । सहित समाज राम पहिं आए ॥
प्रभु प्रनामु करि दीन्ह सुआसनु । बैठे सब सुनि मुनि अनुसासनु ॥ ३ ॥
बोले मुनिबरु बचन बिचारी । देस काल अवसर अनुहारी ॥
सुनहु राम सरबग्य सुजाना । धरम नीति गुन ग्यान निधाना ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing Bharata's words and seeing his love, the sage as well as the whole assembly were transported out of themselves. Bharata's transcendent glory resembled the ocean and the sage's wit stood on its brink like a helpless woman who longed to cross it and sought many a device but was unable to find a boat, ship or raft. Who else, then, can glorify Bharata? Can the ocean be contained in the shell of a small pool? The sage was pleased with Bharata in his heart of hearts; with the whole assembly, therefore, he came to Śrī Rāma. The Lord made obeisance and offered him a seat of honour; and receiving the sage's permission all sat down. The great sage then spoke in well-considered phrases appropriate to the time, place and circumstances: "Listen, Rāma; you are omniscient and wise and a storehouse of piety, prudence, virtue and knowledge. (1—4)

दो०—सब के उर अंतर बसहु जानहु भाउ कुभाउ ।
पुरजन जननी भरत हित होइ सो कहिअ उपाउ ॥ २५७ ॥

"You dwell in the heart of all and know our good and evil intentions. Tell us, therefore, the way in which the citizens, your mothers and Bharata too may be benefited. (257)

चौ०—आरत कहहिं बिचारि न काऊ । सूझ जुआरिहि आपन दाऊ ॥
सुनि मुनि बचन कहत रघुराऊ । नाथ तुम्हारेहि हाथ उपाऊ ॥ १ ॥
सब कर हित रुख राउरि राखें । आयसु किएँ मुदित फुर भाषें ॥
प्रथम जो आयसु मो कहुँ होई । माथें मानि करौं सिख सोई ॥ २ ॥
पुनि जेहि कहँ जस कहब गोसाईं । सो सब भाँति घटिहि सेवकाईं ॥
कह मुनि राम सत्य तुम्ह भाषा । भरत सनेहँ बिचारु न राखा ॥ ३ ॥
तेहि तें कहउँ बहोरि बहोरी । भरत भगति बस भइ मति मोरी ॥
मोरें जान भरत रुचि राखी । जो कीजिअ सो सुभ सिव साखी ॥ ४ ॥

"The afflicted never speak with forethought. A gambler sees his own game." On hearing the sage's words the Lord of Raghus replied, "My lord, the remedy lies in your own hands. Everyone will be benefited by meeting your wishes, carrying out your behests and gladly acclaiming them. In the first place, whatever orders and instructions are given to me I will reverently carry them out. Then, my lord, whoever receives any order from you will fully devote himself to your service." Said the sage, "What you have said, Rāma, is true; but Bharata's love has robbed me of my wits. That is why I say again and again, my judgment has been enthralled by Bharata's devotion. To my mind, Śiva be my witness, whatever you do with due deference to Bharata's wishes will be all for good. (1—4)

दो०—भरत बिनय सादर सुनिअ करिअ बिचारु बहोरि।
करब साधुमत लोकमत नृपनय निगम निचोरि॥ २५८॥

"Listen with attention to Bharata's humble submission and then think over it. Again, sifting the worldly point of view and the conclusions of holy men as well as of the political science and the Vedas do what they enjoin upon you." (258)

चौ०—गुर अनुरागु भरत पर देखी। राम हृदयँ आनंदु बिसेषी॥
भरतहि धरम धुरंधर जानी। निज सेवक तन मानस बानी॥ १॥
बोले गुर आयस अनुकूला। बचन मंजु मृदु मंगलमूला॥
नाथ सपथ पितु चरन दोहाई। भयउ न भुअन भरत सम भाई॥ २॥
जे गुर पद अंबुज अनुरागी। ते लोकहुँ बेदहुँ बड़भागी॥
राउर जा पर अस अनुरागू। को कहि सकइ भरत कर भागू॥ ३॥
लखि लघु बंधु बुद्धि सकुचाई। करत बदन पर भरत बड़ाई॥
भरतु कहहिं सोइ किएँ भलाई। अस कहि राम रहे अरगाई॥ ४॥

Śrī Rāma was particularly delighted at heart to see the Guru's affection for Bharata. Knowing Bharata to be a champion of virtue and His servant in thought, word and deed, He spoke words that were sweet, soft and delightful and harmonized with the Guru's commands: "My lord, I swear by you as well as by the feet of my father that in the whole world there has been no brother like Bharata. Those who are devoted to the lotus feet of their preceptor are highly blessed from the point of view of the world as well as of the Vedas. And who can extol Bharata's good fortune, for whom you cherish such love? Knowing him to be a younger brother my mind recoils when I proceed to praise him to his face. Of course it will be conducive to our good to do what he suggests." Having said so Śrī Rāma kept silent. (1—4)

दो०—तब मुनि बोले भरत सन सब सँकोचु तजि तात।
कृपासिंधु प्रिय बंधु सन कहहु हृदय कै बात॥ २५९॥

The sage now said to Bharata, "Shaking off all scruple, my dear child, tell your dear brother, who is an ocean of kindness, what is there in your heart." (259)

चौ०—सुनि मुनि बचन राम रुख पाई। गुरु साहिब अनुकूल अघाई।
लखि अपनें सिर सबु छरु भारू। कहि न सकहिं कछु करहिं बिचारू॥ १॥
पुलकि सरीर सभाँ भए ठाढ़े। नीरज नयन नेह जल बाढ़े॥
कहब मोर मुनिनाथ निबाहा। एहि तें अधिक कहौं मैं काहा॥ २॥
मैं जानउँ निज नाथ सुभाऊ। अपराधिहु पर कोह न काऊ॥
मो पर कृपा सनेहु बिसेषी। खेलत खुनिस न कबहूँ देखी॥ ३॥
सिसुपन तें परिहरेउँ न संगू। कबहुँ न कीन्ह मोर मन भंगू॥
मैं प्रभु कृपा रीति जियँ जोही। हारेहूँ खेल जितावहिं मोही॥ ४॥

When Bharata heard the sage's words and came to know what was in Śrī Rāma's mind, he was satisfied that both the preceptor and the master were exceedingly propitious to him. At the same time he realized that the entire responsibility had been thrown on his own shoulders. He was, therefore, unable to speak a word and became thoughtful. With his body thrilling all over he stood in the assembly and tears of love gushed forth from his lotus eyes. "The lord of sages has already said what I had to say. Beyond that I have nothing to submit. I know the disposition of my master, who is never angry even with the offender. To me he has been particularly kind and affectionate; I have never seen him frown even in play. Even from my infancy I never left his company and at no time did he damp my spirits. I have realized in my heart the benevolent ways of my lord, who would have me win a game even though I had lost it. (1—4)

दो०—महूँ सनेह सकोच बस सनमुख कही न बैन।
दरसन तृपित न आजु लगि पेम पिआसे नैन॥ २६०॥

"Overcome by affection and modesty I too never opened my lips before him. And my eyes, that have been thirsting through love for his sight, have not been sated to this day. (260)

चौ०—बिधि न सकेउ सहि मोर दुलारा। नीच बीचु जननी मिस पारा॥
यहउ कहत मोहि आजु न सोभा। अपनीं समुझि साधु सुचि को भा॥ १॥
मातु मंदि मैं साधु सुचाली। उर अस आनत कोटि कुचाली॥
फरइ कि कोदव बालि सुसाली। मुकता प्रसव कि संबुक काली॥ २॥
सपनेहुँ दोसक लेसु न काहू। मोर अभाग उदधि अवगाहू॥
बिनु समुझें निज अघ परिपाकू। जारिउँ जायँ जननि कहि काकू॥ ३॥
हृदयँ हेरि हारेउँ सब ओरा। एकहि भाँति भलेहिं भल मोरा॥
गुर गोसाइँ साहिब सिय रामू। लागत मोहि नीक परिनामू॥ ४॥

But Fate could not bear to see me treated with fondness. In the disguise of my vile mother God created a cleft between us. It does not behove me today to say even this; for who has come to be recognized as good and innocent on the basis of his own estimation? To entertain the thought that my mother is wicked while I am virtuous and upright is itself tantamount to a million

evil practices. Can an ear of the *Kodo** plant yield good rice and can a dark bivalve shell produce a pearl? Not a tinge of blame attaches to anyone even in a dream. My ill-luck is unfathomable like the ocean. In vain did I torment my mother by taunting her without estimating the consequences of my own sins. I have mentally surveyed all possible avenues but feel frustrated. There is only one hope of my salvation: Your Holiness is my preceptor while Sītā and Rāma are my masters. From this I presume that all will be well in the end. (1–4)

दो०—साधु सभाँ गुर प्रभु निकट कहउँ सुथल सति भाउ।
प्रेम प्रपंचु कि झूठ फुर जानहिं मुनि रघुराउ ॥ २६१ ॥

"In this concourse of holy men, in the presence of my preceptor and master and in this holy place I speak in good faith. Whether there is any love in my heart or it is all simulation and whether what I say is true or false is known to the sage as well as to the Lord of Raghus. (261)

चौ०—भूपति मरन पेम पनु राखी। जननी कुमति जगतु सबु साखी ॥
देखि न जाहिं बिकल महतारीं। जरहिं दुसह जर पुर नर नारीं ॥ १ ॥
महीं सकल अनरथ कर मूला। सो सुनि समुझि सहिउँ सब सूला ॥
सुनि बन गवनु कीन्ह रघुनाथा। करि मुनि बेष लखन सिय साथा ॥ २ ॥
बिनु पानहिन्ह पयादेहि पाएँ। संकरु साखि रहेउँ एहि घाएँ ॥
बहुरि निहारि निषाद सनेहू। कुलिस कठिन उर भयउ न बेहू ॥ ३ ॥
अब सबु आँखिन्ह देखेउँ आई। जिअत जीव जड़ सबइ सहाई ॥
जिन्हहि निरखि मग साँपिनि बीछी। तजहिं बिषम बिषु तामस तीछी ॥ ४ ॥

"The whole world will bear witness, on the one hand, to the king having died as a result of his uncompromising love, and to my mother's evil intent, on the other. The queen-mothers are in such distress that one cannot bear to look at them; while the men and women of the city are burning with deep agony. I have heard and realized that I am the root of all trouble and have accordingly endured all suffering. To crown all, when I heard that clad in hermit's robes and accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, the Lord of Raghus had proceeded to the woods on foot and without shoes, God Śaṅkara be my witness, I survived even that blow. On top of it, when I witnessed the Niṣāda's love, my heart, which is harder than adamant, refused to break. And now I have seen all with my own eyes and so long as I live my stupid soul will subject me to all kinds of suffering. What shall I say of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, at whose sight even snakes and scorpions on the road forget their virulent poison and irrepressible anger! (1–4)

दो०—तेइ रघुनंदनु लखनु सिय अनहित लागे जाहि।
तासु तनय तजि दुसह दुख दैउ सहावइ काहि ॥ २६२ ॥

---

* The *Kodo* (Sanskrit *Kodrava*) is a kind of corn grown in the eastern parts of U. P. It bears a small grain of inferior quality, eaten only by the poor.

"On whom else, then, should Providence inflict severe pain if not on the son of Kaikeyī, who looked upon these very Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā as her enemies !" (262)

चौ०—सुनि अति बिकल भरत बर बानी । आरति प्रीति बिनय नय सानी ॥
सोक मगन सब सभाँ खभारू । मनहुँ कमल बन परेउ तुसारू ॥ १ ॥
कहि अनेक बिधि कथा पुरानी । भरत प्रबोधु कीन्ह मुनि ग्यानी ॥
बोले उचित बचन रघुनंदू । दिनकर कुल कैरव बन चंदू ॥ २ ॥
तात जायँ जियँ करहु गलानी । ईस अधीन जीव गति जानी ॥
तीनि काल तिभुअन मत मोरें । पुन्यसिलोक तात तर तोरें ॥ ३ ॥
उर आनत तुम्ह पर कुटिलाई । जाइ लोकु परलोकु नसाई ॥
दोसु देहिं जननिहि जड़ तेई । जिन्ह गुर साधु सभा नहिं सेई ॥ ४ ॥

On hearing the excellent and most impassioned speech of Bharata, which was full of agony and love, humility and prudence, everybody was plunged in sorrow and the assembly became sad as if a bed of lotuses was smitten by frost. The enlightened sage comforted Bharata by narrating old legends of various kinds; and the Delighter of Raghus, who was a veritable moon to the lily-like solar race, spoke words which were meet and proper: "You feel humiliated in spirit for nothing, dear brother; know that the destiny of souls lies in the hands of God. To my mind, men of holy reputation in all the three spheres of creation and belonging to the past, present and future are pygmies before you, my darling. He who attributes malevolence to you even in his heart will be ruined in this world as well as in the next. As for mother Kaikeyī they alone blame her, who have waited neither on the Guru nor on assemblage of holy men. (1—4)

दो०—मिटिहहिं पाप प्रपंच सब अखिल अमंगल भार ।
लोक सुजसु परलोक सुखु सुमिरत नामु तुम्हार ॥ २६३ ॥

"With the very invocation of your name all sins and error and all the hosts of evils will be obliterated; nay, it will bring in its train fair renown in this world and happiness hereafter. (263)

चौ०—कहउँ सुभाउ सत्य सिव साखी । भरत भूमि रह राउरि राखी ॥
तात कुतरक करहु जनि जाएँ । बैर पेम नहिं दुरइ दुराएँ ॥ १ ॥
मुनि गन निकट बिहग मृग जाहीं । बाधक बधिक बिलोकि पराहीं ॥
हित अनहित पसु पच्छिउ जाना । मानुष तनु गुन ग्यान निधाना ॥ २ ॥
तात तुम्हहि मैं जानउँ नीकें । करौं काह असमंजस जीकें ॥
राखेउ रायँ सत्य मोहि त्यागी । तनु परिहरेउ पेम पन लागी ॥ ३ ॥
तासु बचन मेटत मन सोचू । तेहि तें अधिक तुम्हार सँकोचू ॥
ता पर गुर मोहि आयसु दीन्हा । अवसि जो कहहु चहउँ सोइ कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

"With Lord Śiva as my witness I speak the truth in good faith, Bharata: the earth is being sustained by you. Pray do not indulge in wrong hypotheses about yourself for nothing, my darling; hatred and love cannot be disguised

even if one tries to conceal them. Birds and beasts draw close to hermits, while they run away at the very sight of a hunter who torments them. Even beasts and birds can distinguish between a friend and a foe, to say nothing of the human body, which is a storehouse of virtue and knowledge. I know you full well, dear brother; but what am I to do? There is great perplexity in my mind. The king (our father), you know, kept his word and abandoned me; nay, he gave up his life in order to keep his vow of love. I feel perturbed in my mind if I proceed to violate his word; and my scruple on your account is even greater. On top of it my preceptor has given his command to me. In any case I am prepared to do precisely what you suggest. (1–4)

दो०—मनु प्रसन्न करि सकुच तजि कहहु करौं सोइ आजु ।
सत्यसंध रघुबर बचन सुनि भा सुखी समाजु ॥ २६४ ॥

"With a cheerful heart and shaking off all scruple tell me what to do; and I will accomplish it this very day." The assembly rejoiced to hear these words of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghu's line), who was ever true to his word. (264)

चौ०—सुर गन सहित सभय सुरराजू । सोचहिं चाहत होन अकाजू ॥
बनत उपाउ करत कछु नाहीं । राम सरन सब गे मन माहीं ॥ १ ॥
बहुरि बिचारि परस्पर कहहीं । रघुपति भगत भगति बस अहहीं ॥
सुधि करि अंबरीष दुरबासा । भे सुर सुरपति निपट निरासा ॥ २ ॥
सहे सुरन्ह बहु काल बिषादा । नरहरि किए प्रगट प्रहलादा ॥
लगि लगि कान कहहिं धुनि माथा । अब सुर काज भरत के हाथा ॥ ३ ॥
आन उपाउ न देखिअ देवा । मानत रामु सुसेवक सेवा ॥
हियँ सपेम सुमिरहु सब भरतहि । निज गुन सील राम बस करतहि ॥ ४ ॥

Indra (the king of celestials) and the hosts of other gods trembled with fear and felt perturbed at the thought that their whole scheme was going to miscarry. They were completely at a loss what to do. At last they mentally approached Śrī Rāma for protection. Again they deliberated with one another and said that the Lord of Raghus was under the spell of the devotion of His devotees. Remembering the story of Ambarīṣa and Durvāsā the gods as well as their lord (Indra) became utterly despondent. In the past too the gods suffered for a long time till at last it was Prahlāda who revealed Lord Nṛsiṁha.* Beating their head they whispered into one another's ear: "The gods' interests now lie in Bharata's hands. We see no other remedy, O gods; our only hope is that Śrī Rāma acknowledges the services rendered to His noble servants. Do you all, therefore, invoke with a loving heart Bharata, who has won over Śrī Rāma by his goodness and amiability." (1–4)

दो०—सुनि सुर मत सुरगुर कहेउ भल तुम्हार बड़ भागु ।
सकल सुमंगल मूल जग भरत चरन अनुरागु ॥ २६५ ॥

---

* So-called because He had taken the form of a man-lion.

When the preceptor of the gods (the sage Bṛhaspati) heard of the gods' intention, he said, "Good! Your luck is great. Devotion to Bharata's feet is the root of all choice blessings in this world. (265)

चौ०—सीतापति सेवक सेवकाई । कामधेनु सय सरिस सुहाई ॥
भरत भगति तुम्हरें मन आई । तजहु सोचु बिधि बात बनाई ॥ १ ॥
देखु देवपति भरत प्रभाऊ । सहज सुभायँ बिबस रघुराऊ ॥
मन थिर करहु देव डरु नाहीं । भरतहि जानि राम परिछाहीं ॥ २ ॥
सुनि सुरगुर सुर संमत सोचू । अंतरजामी प्रभुहि सकोचू ॥
निज सिर भारु भरत जियँ जाना । करत कोटि बिधि उर अनुमाना ॥ ३ ॥
करि बिचारु मन दीन्ही ठीका । राम रजायस आपन नीका ॥
निज पन तजि राखेउ पनु मोरा । छोहु सनेहु कीन्ह नहिं थोरा ॥ ४ ॥

"The service of a devotee of Sītā's lord is as good as a hundred cows of plenty (*i. e.*, it fulfils all one's desires). Now that devotion to Bharata has appealed to your mind worry no more; for God has accomplished your object. See Bharata's greatness, O king of gods: the Lord of Raghus is completely under his sway as a matter of course. Knowing Bharata to be Srī Rama's shadow, make your mind easy, O gods; there is no cause for fear." The Lord, who has access to all hearts, felt uncomfortable when He came to know of the conference between the gods and their preceptor (the sage Brhaspati) and of the anxiety of the former. Bharata now felt in his heart that the whole responsibility rested on his shoulders; he, therefore, entertained in his mind propositions of innumerable kinds. After much deliberation he came to the conclusion that his welfare consisted in obeying Srī Rama. "He has kept my vow, relinquishing his own, and has thereby shown not a little kindness and love. (1—4)

दो०—कीन्ह अनुग्रह अमित अति सब बिधि सीतानाथ ।
करि प्रनामु बोले भरतु जोरि जलज जुग हाथ ॥ २६६ ॥

"Sīta's lord has done me a great and unbounded favour in every way." Then, bowing his head and joining his lotus hands, Bharata said:— (266)

चौ०—कहौं कहावौं का अब स्वामी । कृपा अंबुनिधि अंतरजामी ॥
गुर प्रसन्न साहिब अनुकूला । मिटी मलिन मन कलपित सूला ॥ १ ॥
अपडर डरेउँ न सोच समूलें । रबिहि न दोसु देव दिसि भूलें ॥
मोर अभागु मातु कुटिलाई । बिधि गति बिषम काल कठिनाई ॥ २ ॥
पाउ रोपि सब मिलि मोहि घाला । प्रनतपाल पन आपन पाला ॥
यह नइ रीति न राउरि होई । लोकहुँ बेद बिदित नहिं गोई ॥ ३ ॥
जगु अनभल भल एकु गोसाईं । कहिअ होइ भल कासु भलाईं ॥
देउ देवतरु सरिस सुभाऊ । सनमुख बिमुख न काहुहि काऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"What shall I say or put into others' mouth, my lord, an ocean of compassion and the knower of all hearts that you are ? Now that my Guru is pleased and my master (yourself) propitious, the torment, which was the creation

of my foul mind is over. I was obsessed with imaginary fears and my anxiety had no foundation whatsoever. It is no fault of the sun if anyone mistakes the quarters. My own ill luck, my mother's perversity, the odd ways of Providence and the cruelty of fate, all conspired with the avowed object of ruining me; but you came to my rescue by redeeming your vow (of protecting your devotees), a protector of the suppliant that you are. This is, however, no novel procedure for you; it is well-known to the world as well as to the Vedas and is an open secret. If the whole world is hostile and you alone are kindly disposed, my lord, tell me through whose goodness, if not through yours, can one's good be accomplished? My lord, you are of the same disposition as the tree of paradise it is neither for nor against anyone. (1—4)

दो०—जाइ निकट पहिचानि तरु छाहँ समनि सब सोच ।
मागत अभिमत पाव जग राउ रंकु भल पोच ॥ २६७ ॥

"Should anyone approach the tree of paradise recognizing it as such, its very shade relieves all anxiety. And everyone in this world obtains the desired object on the mere asking, be he a prince or pauper, good or bad. (267)

चौ०—लखि सब बिधि गुर स्वामि सनेहू । मिटेउ छोभु नहिं मन संदेहू ॥
अब करुनाकर कीजिअ सोई । जन हित प्रभु चित छोभु न होई ॥ १ ॥
जो सेवकु साहिबहि सँकोची । निज हित चहइ तासु मति पोची ॥
सेवक हित साहिब सेवकाई । करै सकल सुख लोभ बिहाई ॥ २ ॥
स्वारथु नाथ फिरें सबही का । किएँ रजाइ कोटि बिधि नीका ॥
यह स्वारथ परमारथ सारू । सकल सुकृत फल सुगति सिंगारू ॥ ३ ॥
देव एक बिनती सुनि मोरी । उचित होइ तस करब बहोरी ॥
तिलक समाजु साजि सबु आना । करिअ सुफल प्रभु जौं मनु माना ॥ ४ ॥

"Since I have found my Guru and my master (yourself) affectionate to me in every way, my unrest has gone and I have no doubt left in my mind. Now, O mine of compassion, take steps to see that you do not feel perturbed for the sake of your servant. A servant who seeks his own gain by placing his master in an embarrassing situation is a mean-minded fellow. A servant will gain only if he serves his master renouncing all his personal comforts and greed. If, my lord, you return to Ayodhya, everyone will be a gainer. And if we obey your orders, we shall gain in millions of ways. Obedience to you constitutes the highest gain both materially and spiritually; nay, it is the consummation of all meritorious acts and the ornament of all good destinies. My lord, listen to a request of mine and then do as you deem fit. I have brought with me, duly arranged, all the requisites for the coronation ceremony. Kindly have it brought into use, my lord, if it so pleases you. (1—4)

दो०—सानुज पठइअ मोहि बन कीजिअ सबहि सनाथ ।
नतरु फेरिअहिं बंधु दोउ नाथ चलौं मैं साथ ॥ २६८ ॥

"Send me into exile with my younger brother (Śatrughna) and let everybody feel secure under your protection. Or else, send back both the younger brothers (Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna) and let me accompany you, my lord. (268)

चौ०—नतरु जाहिं बन तीनिउ भाई। बहुरिअ सीय सहित रघुराई ॥
जेहि बिधि प्रभु प्रसन्न मन होई। करुना सागर कीजिअ सोई ॥ १ ॥
देवँ दीन्ह सबु मोहि अभारू। मोरें नीति न धरम बिचारू ॥
कहउँ बचन सब स्वारथ हेतू। रहत न आरत कें चित चेतू ॥ २ ॥
उतरु देइ सुनि स्वामि रजाई। सो सेवकु लखि लाज लजाई ॥
अस मैं अवगुन उदधि अगाधू। स्वामि सनेहँ सराहत साधू ॥ ३ ॥
अब कृपाल मोहि सो मत भावा। सकुच स्वामि मन जाइँ न पावा ॥
प्रभु पद सपथ कहउँ सति भाऊ। जग मंगल हित एक उपाऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"Or (as a third alternative) we three brothers may remain in the forest, while Sītā and yourself may return to Ayodhyā. Do that, O ocean of mercy, which may please your heart, my lord. You have thrown the whole burden on me, my master; but I have no ethical insight nor any idea of religion. I am actuated by self-interest in whatever I say; a man in distress loses his senses. Shame herself would be ashamed to look at a servant who evades compliance with an order given by his master. Even though I am such an unfathomable ocean of faults, my master (yourself) out of affection for me praises me as a noble soul. Now, O merciful one, I will submit to that proposition which will spare my lord an awkward situation. Swearing by my lord's feet I tell you in good faith that this is the only way to ensure the happiness of the world.
(1—4)

दो०—प्रभु प्रसन्न मन सकुच तजि जो जेहि आयसु देब।
सो सिर धरि धरि करिहि सबु मिटिहि अनट अवरेब ॥ २६९ ॥

"Each one of us will reverently carry out the orders that the Lord may be pleased to give with a cheerful heart and without reserve; and all injustice and imbroglio will end."
(269)

चौ०—भरत बचन सुचि सुनि सुर हरषे। साधु सराहि सुमन सुर बरषे ॥
असमंजस बस अवध नेवासी। प्रमुदित मन तापस बनबासी ॥ १ ॥
चुपहिं रहे रघुनाथ सँकोची। प्रभु गति देखि सभा सब सोची ॥
जनक दूत तेहि अवसर आए। मुनि बसिष्ठँ सुनि बेगि बोलाए ॥ २ ॥
करि प्रनाम तिन्ह रामु निहारे। बेषु देखि भए निपट दुखारे ॥
दूतन्ह मुनिबर बूझी बाता। कहहु बिदेह भूप कुसलाता ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि सकुचाइ नाइ महि माथा। बोले चर बर जोरें हाथा ॥
बूझब राउर सादर साईं। कुसल हेतु सो भयउ गोसाईं ॥ ४ ॥

The gods rejoiced to hear Bharata's guileless speech; and acclaiming him in the words "Well done !" they rained down flowers. The people of Ayodhyā felt much puzzled, while the ascetics and the foresters were greatly delighted. The Lord of Raghus, who was very considerate by nature, kept mum; and observing His silence the whole assembly felt perturbed. That very moment messengers from King Janaka arrived. When the sage Vasiṣtha heard

of it he sent for them promptly. After making obeisance they looked at Śrī Rāma and were much grieved to behold His attire (which resembled that of a hermit). The chief of sages, Vasiṣṭha, made enquires from the messengers: "Tell me if all is well with King Videha (Janaka)." The noble messengers felt abashed to hear this. They bowed their head to the ground and replied with joined palms: "Your loving enquiry itself, O lord, has proved conducive to our good, holy father. (1–4)

दो०—नाहिं त कोसल नाथ कें साथ कुसल गइ नाथ।
मिथिला अवध बिसेष तें जगु सब भयउ अनाथ॥ २७०॥

"Otherwise our welfare, O lord, passed away with the king of Kosala, whose death has left the whole world, particularly Mithilā (Janaka's capital) and Ayodhyā, masterless. (270)

चौ०—कोसलपति गति सुनि जनकौरा। भे सब लोक सोक बस बौरा॥
जेहिं देखे तेहि समय बिदेहू। नामु सत्य अस लाग न केहू॥ १॥
रानि कुचालि सुनत नरपालहि। सूझ न कछु जस मनि बिनु ब्यालहि॥
भरत राज रघुबर बनबासू। भा मिथिलेसहि हृदयँ हराँसू॥ २॥
नृप बूझे बुध सचिव समाजू। कहहु बिचारि उचित का आजू॥
समुझि अवध असमंजस दोऊ। चलिअ कि रहिअ न कह कछु कोऊ॥ ३॥
नृपहिं धीर धरि हृदयँ बिचारी। पठए अवध चतुर चर चारी॥
बूझि भरत सतिभाउ कुभाऊ। आएहु बेगि न होइ लखाऊ॥ ४॥

"On hearing of the demise of King Daśaratha (the lord of Ayodhyā) the people of Janakpur were all mad with grief. No one who saw King Videha at that time took his name (Videha) to have any truth behind it. When the king heard of Queen Kaikeyī's wickedness, he was as nonplussed as a serpent without its gem. Prince Bharata crowned king and the Chief of Raghus, Śrī Rāma, exiled into the woods! The news caused deep agony to the heart of Mithilā's lord! The king called together a council of wise men and ministers and said, 'Tell me after careful deliberation what ought to be done now.' But realizing the conditions at Ayodhyā and the difficulty in either case nobody gave any definite opinion whether he should go or stay at home. The king now collected himself and after calm reflection despatched four clever spies to Ayodhyā with the following instructions: 'Ascertain whether Bharata means well or ill and come back at once without being recognized.' (1–4)

दो०—गए अवध चर भरत गति बूझि देखि करतूति।
चले चित्रकूटहि भरतु चार चले तेरहूति॥ २७१॥

"The spies went to Ayodhyā and having ascertained Bharata's ways and seen his doings they proceeded back to Tirhut (Mithilā) the moment the latter left for Chitrakūṭa. (271)

चौ०—दूतन्ह आइ भरत कइ करनी । जनक समाज जथामति बरनी ॥
सुनि गुर परिजन सचिव महीपति । भे सब सोच सनेहँ बिकल अति ॥ १ ॥
धरि धीरजु करि भरत बड़ाई । लिए सुभट साहनी बोलाई ॥
घर पुर देस राखि रखवारे । हय गय रथ बहु जान सँवारे ॥ २ ॥
दुघरी साधि चले ततकाला । किए बिश्रामु न मग महिपाला ॥
भोरहिं आजु नहाइ प्रयागा । चले जमुन उतरन सबु लागा ॥ ३ ॥
खबरि लेन हम पठए नाथा । तिन्ह कहि अस महि नायउ माथा ॥
साथ किरात छ सातक दीन्हे । मुनिबर तुरत बिदा चर कीन्हे ॥ ४ ॥

"The spies on their arrival gave an account in Janaka's court of Bharata's doings as best as they could. The Guru (the sage Śatānanda), the members of the royal family, the ministers and the king himself were all overpowered with grief and affection at the report. Then, collecting himself and glorifying Bharata, the king summoned his chosen warriors and equerries and, posting guards at the palaces, city and realm got ready a number of horses, elephants, chariots and other conveyances. After ascertaining a lucky period within an hour* he started at once and did not halt on the way. Having bathed at Prayaga this very morning, he has already left the place; and when the whole party began to cross the Yamuna, they despatched us ahead for obtaining news, holy sir." So saying they bowed their head to the ground. The great sage Vasiṣṭha dismissed the messengers at once, sending with them an escort of six or seven Kirātas. (1–4)

दो०—सुनत जनक आगवनु सबु हरषेउ अवध समाजु ।
रघुनंदनहि सकोचु बड़ सोच बिबस सुरराजु ॥ २७२ ॥

The people of Ayodhya were all delighted to hear of Janaka's arrival. Srī Rama, the Delighter of Raghus, felt very uncomfortable; while Indra, the king of celestials, was particularly overwhelmed with anxiety. (272)

चौ०—गरइ गलानि कुटिल कैकेई । काहि कहै केहि दूषनु देई ॥
अस मन आनि मुदित नर नारी । भयउ बहोरि रहब दिन चारी ॥ १ ॥
एहि प्रकार गत बासर सोऊ । प्रात महान लाग सबु कोऊ ॥
करि मज्जनु पूजहिं नर मारी । गनप गौरि तिपुरारि तमारी ॥ २ ॥
रमा रमन पद बंदि बहोरी । बिनवहिं अंजुलि अंचल जोरी ॥
राजा रामु जानकी रानी । आनँद अवधि अवध रजधानी ॥ ३ ॥
सुबस बसउ फिरि सहित समाजा । भरतहि रामु करहुँ जुबराजा ॥
एहि सुख सुधाँ सींचि सब काहू । देव देहु जग जीवन लाहू ॥ ४ ॥

* There is a universal belief among the Hindus in the occult influence of stars upon human affairs and in his day-to-day life a Hindu is guided by astrological principles both in his secular and religious activities. Even while undertaking a journey he is required to consult the astrologer and insists on leaving his home on an auspicious day and at an auspicious hour. In urgent and emergent cases, however, when he cannot afford to wait for an auspicious day, he is allowed to choose a lucky moment in the course of an hour and may leave at that moment. King Janaka is here referred to as having availed himself of this expedient.

The malevolent KaikeyI was writhing with remorse. To whom should she speak out her mind and whom could she blame? The people, on the other hand, rejoiced to think that their stay was ensured for some days more. In this way that day too was spent. The next morning everyone proceeded to bathe. And after their ablutions the men and women worshipped Lord Ganesa, Goddess GaurI (Siva's Consort), Bhagavan Siva (the Slayer of the demon Tripura) and the Sun-god (the Dispeller of darkness). Again, they reverenced the feet of Bhagavān Visnu* (the Lord of LaksmI) and prayed, the men raising their joined palms, the women holding out the skirt of their garment (after the way of beggars): "With SrI Rama our king and SIta (Janaka's Daughter) our queen, may our capital, Ayodhya, be gloriously re-peopled with its various communities and grow to be the very culmination of joy; and may SrI Rama instal Bharata as the Crown Prince. Bathing all in the nectar of this bliss, let everyone, O Lord, reap the reward of his existence in this world. (1–4)

दो०—गुर समाज भाइन्ह सहित राम राजु पुर होउ ।
अछत राम राजा अवध मरिअ माग सबु कोउ ॥ २७३ ॥

"May SrI Rama rule over this city, assisted by his Guru, councillors and brothers. And may we die in Ayodhyā with SrI Rama as still our king." This was what everyone asked in prayer. (273)

चौ०—सुनि सनेहमय पुरजन बानी । निंदहिं जोग बिरति मुनि ग्यानी ॥
एहि बिधि नित्यकरम करि पुरजन । रामहि करहिं प्रनाम पुलकि तन ॥ १ ॥
ऊँच नीच मध्यम नर नारी । लहहिं दरसु निज निज अनुहारी ॥
सावधान सबही सनमानहिं । सकल सराहत कृपानिधानहिं ॥ २ ॥
लरिकाइहि तें रघुबर बानी । पालत नीति प्रीति पहिचानी ॥
सील सकोच सिंधु रघुराऊ । सुमुख सुलोचन सरल सुभाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
कहत राम गुन गन अनुरागे । सब निज भाग सराहन लागे ॥
हम सम पुन्य पुंज जग थोरे । जिन्हहि रामु जानत करि मोरे ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing the affectionate words of the citizens even enlightened sages talked disparagingly of Yoga (ascetic-ism) and dispassion. Having thus performed their daily devotions the citizens made obeisance to SrI Rama with a thrill of joy. Men and women of every rank—high, low or middling—were blessed with His sight according to their own conception. SrI Rama scrupulously honoured all and everyone praised the Storehouse of Compassion in the following words: "From his very boyhood it has been SrI Rama's wont to observe the rules of propriety, duly recognizing the love one cherishes towards him. With a lovely and cheerful countenance, gracious looks and a guileless disposition the Lord of Raghus is an ocean of amiability and modesty."

* The poet enumerates here the five principal deities of the Hindu pantheon. They are all believed to represent the Supreme Divinity; and a Hindu generally worships any one of these or all the five together as his chosen deity or deities.

Thus recounting the virtues of Śrī Rāma they were all overwhelmed with emotion and began to extol their good fortune: "There are few people in the world as meritorious as we, whom Śrī Rāma recognizes as his own!" (1–4)

दो०—प्रेम मगन तेहि समय सब सुनि आवत मिथिलेसु ।
सहित सभा संभ्रम उठेउ रबिकुल कमल दिनेसु ॥ २७४ ॥

All were absorbed in love at that time. Presently on hearing of the approach of King Janaka, the lord of Mithilā, Śrī Rāma, who was a veritable sun to the lotus-like solar race, and the whole assembly rose in a hurry (to receive him). (274)

चौ०—भाइ सचिव गुर पुरजन साथा । आगें गवनु कीन्ह रघुनाथा ॥
गिरिबरु दीख जनकपति जबहीं । करि प्रनामु रथ त्यागेउ तबहीं ॥ १ ॥
राम दरस लालसा उछाहू । पथ श्रम लेसु कलेसु न काहू ॥
मन तहँ जहँ रघुबर बैदेही । बिनु मन तन दुख सुख सुधि केही ॥ २ ॥
आवत जनकु चले एहि भाँती । सहित समाज प्रेम मति माती ॥
आए निकट देखि अनुरागे । सादर मिलन परसपर लागे ॥ ३ ॥
लगे जनक मुनिजन पद बंदन । रिषिन्ह प्रनामु कीन्ह रघुनंदन ॥
भाइन्ह सहित रामु मिलि राजहि । चले लवाइ समेत समाजहि ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord of Raghus led the way, accompanied by His younger brothers, the minister (Sumantra), the Guru (Vasiṣṭha) and the citizens. The moment the lord of Janakas* espied the great hill of Kāmadanātha he made obeisance to it and dismounted from his car. Seized as they were with a longing and eagerness to see Śrī Rāma, none of the party felt the least toil or hardship of the journey. For their mind was with the Chief of Raghus and Vaidehī (Janaka's Daughter); and when the mind is elsewhere, who will feel the bodily pain or pleasure? In this way Janaka came advancing with his party, their mind intoxicated with love. When the two parties drew near and saw one another they were overwhelmed with love and began to exchange greetings with due respect. King Janaka proceeded to adore the feet of the hermits (who hailed from Ayodhyā); while Śrī Rāma, the Delighter of Raghus, made obeisance to the sages (who accompanied Janaka). Śrī Rāma and His younger brothers then greeted the king (their father-in-law) and led him with the whole party (to His hermitage). (1–4)

दो०—आश्रम सागर सांत रस पूरन पावन पाथु ।
सेन मनहुँ करुना सरित लिएँ जाहिं रघुनाथु ॥ २७५ ॥

Śrī Rāma's hermitage was an ocean as it were overflowing with the sacred water of quietism; while the host that accompanied Janaka was as it were a river of pathos, which the Lord of Raghus was now conducting (to the ocean of His hermitage). (275)

* Just like 'Videha', 'Janaka' too was a title enjoyed by all the descendants of King Nimi. Hence the king of Mithilā has been referred to here as the "lord of Janakas".

चौ०—बोरति ग्यान बिराग करारे । बचन ससोक मिलत नद नारे ॥
सोच उसास समीर तरंगा । धीरज तट तरुबर कर भंगा ॥ १ ॥
बिषम बिषाद तोरावति धारा । भय भ्रम भवँर अबर्त अपारा ॥
केवट बुध बिद्या बड़ि नावा । सकहिं न खेइ ऐक नहिं आवा ॥ २ ॥
बनचर कोल किरात बिचारे । थके बिलोकि पथिक हियँ हारे ॥
आश्रम उदधि मिली जब जाई । मनहुँ उठेउ अंबुधि अकुलाई ॥ ३ ॥
सोक बिकल दोउ राज समाजा । रहा न ग्यानु न धीरजु लाजा ॥
भूप रूप गुन सील सराही । रोवहिं सोक सिंधु अवगाही ॥ ४ ॥

The river flooded the banks of wisdom and dispassion and was joined in its course by tributary streams and rivulets in the form of sorrowful utterances. Sighs and lamentation severally represented the waves and the wind that uprooted the stout tree of fortitude standing on its banks. It had deep sorrow for its swift current, while fear and delusion constituted its numberless eddies and whirlpools. Boatmen in the form of the learned waited with big boats in the form of their learning; but they were unable to row them, because they had no idea of its depth. The Kols and Kirātas that roamed about in the woods were the poor wayfarers who had lost heart at the sight of the turbulent stream and stood aghast. When the stream joined the ocean of the hermitage, the latter too surged up as it were with emotion. The two royal hosts were so excited with grief that they had no sense, fortitude or shame left. Extolling King Daśaratha's comeliness of form, goodness and amiability they all wept and were plunged into an ocean of woe. (1—4)

छं०—अवगाहि सोक समुद्र सोचहिं नारि नर ब्याकुल महा ।
दै दोष सकल सरोष बोलहिं वाम बिधि कीन्हो कहा ॥
सुर सिद्ध तापस जोगिजन मुनि देखि दसा बिदेह की ।
तुलसी न समरथु कोउ जो तरि सकै सरित सनेह की ॥

Plunged into an ocean of grief the men and women lamented in great anguish. They all angrily and reproachfully exclaimed, "Alas! What has cruel Fate done!" Of the gods, accomplished saints, ascetics, Yogis (mystics) and anchorites, whoever witnessed the condition of Janaka on that occasion, none, says Tulasīdāsa, was strong enough to cross the river of love (to escape being drowned in it).

सो०—किए अमित उपदेस जहँ तहँ लोगन्ह मुनिबरन्ह ।
धीरजु धरिअ नरेस कहेउ बसिष्ठ बिदेह सन ॥ २७६ ॥

Here and there the great sages admonished people in numberless ways; and the sage Vasiṣṭha said to Videha, "Be consoled, O king!" (276)

चौ०—जासु ग्यानु रबि भव निसि नासा । बचन किरन मुनि कमल बिकासा ॥
तेहि कि मोह ममता निअराई । यह सिय राम सनेह बड़ाई ॥ १ ॥

बिषई साधक सिद्ध सयाने । त्रिबिध जीव जग बेद बखाने ॥
राम सनेह सरस मन जासू । साधु सभाँ बड़ आदर तासू ॥ २ ॥
सोह न राम पेम बिनु ग्यानू । करनधार बिनु जिमि जलजानू ॥
मुनि बहुबिधि बिदेहु समुझाए । राम घाट सब लोग नहाए ॥ ३ ॥
सकल सोक संकुल नर नारी । सो बासरु बीतेउ बिनु बारी ॥
पसु खग मृगन्ह न कीन्ह अहारू । प्रिय परिजन कर कौन बिचारू ॥ ४ ॥

Can the darkness of infatuation and attachment ever approach him (King Janaka), the sun of whose wisdom drives away the night of metempsychosis and the rays of whose speech delight the lotus-like sages ? That he too was plunged in grief shows the triumph of the affection he bore for his daughter, Sītā, and Her lord, Śrī Rāma. According to the Vedas there are three types of embodied souls (human beings) in the world—the sensual, the seeker and the wise who have attained perfection (in the form of God-Realization). Of all these he alone is highly honoured in an assembly of holy men, whose heart is sweetened by love for Śrī Rama. Wisdom without love for Śrī Rāma is imperfect like a vessel without the helmsman. The sage Vasistha admonished King Videha in many ways; and now all the people bathed at the ghat associated with the name of Śrī Rama (who generally bathed and said His prayers there). All the men and women were so overwhelmed with grief that the day passed without anyone taking a drop of water. Even the cattle, birds and deer remained without food, to say nothing of Śrī Rāma's near and dear ones. (1—4)

दो०—दोउ समाज निमिराजु रघुराजु नहाने प्रात ।
बैठे सब बट बिटप तर मन मलीन कृस गात ॥ २७७ ॥

At daybreak both King Janaka (the lord of Nimis) and Śrī Rama (the Lord of Raghus) bathed with all their retinue and sat under the banyan tree, sad at heart and wasted in body. (277)

चौ०—जे महिसुर दसरथ पुर बासी । जे मिथिलापति नगर निवासी ॥
हंस बंस गुर जनक पुरोधा । जिन्ह जग मगु परमारथु सोधा ॥ १ ॥
लगे कहन उपदेस अनेका । सहित धरम नय बिरति बिबेका ॥
कौसिक कहि कहि कथा पुरानीं । समुझाई सब सभा सुबानीं ॥ २ ॥
तब रघुनाथ कौसिकहि कहेऊ । नाथ कालि जल बिनु सबु रहेऊ ॥
मुनि कह उचित कहत रघुराई । गयउ बीति दिन पहर अढ़ाई ॥ ३ ॥
रिषि रुख लखि कह तेरहुतिराजू । इहाँ उचित नहिं असन अनाजू ॥
कहा भूप भल सबहि सोहाना । पाइ रजायसु चले नहाना ॥ ४ ॥

The Brahmans who hailed from King Dasaratha's capital (Ayodhya) as well as those who came from King Janaka's capital (Mithilā) and even so Vasistha, the preceptor of the solar race, and Satananda, the family priest of King Janaka, who had explored the way to worldly prosperity as well as the path leading to blessedness, gave discourses on many a topic including

religion, ethics, dispassion and saving knowledge. The sage Viswamitra (a descendant of Kuśika) eloquently admonished the entire assembly with many a reference to ancient legends till the Lord of Raghus said to him, "Everyone, my lord, has remained without water since yesterday." Said the sage, "What the Lord of Raghus says is quite reasonable. It is already past noon even today." Perceiving what was in the mind of the sage (Viswamitra) the king of Tirhut (Mithilā) replied, "It will not be desirable to take cereals here." The king's reasonable reply pleased all; and having received the sage's permission they proceeded to perform their midday ablutions. (1–4)

दो०—तेहि अवसर फल फूल दल मूल अनेक प्रकार ।
लइ आए बनचर बिपुल भरि भरि काँवरि भार ॥ २७८ ॥

At that moment arrived the people of the forest with large quantities of fruits, blossoms, leaves and roots of various kinds loaded in their panniers. (278)

चौ०—कामद भे गिरि राम प्रसादा । अवलोकत अपहरत बिषादा ॥
सर सरिता बन भूमि बिभागा । जनु उमगत आनँद अनुरागा ॥ १ ॥
बेलि बिटप सब सफल सफूला । बोलत खग मृग अलि अनुकूला ॥
तेहि अवसर बन अधिक उछाहू । त्रिबिध समीर सुखद सब काहू ॥ २ ॥
जाइ न बरनि मनोहरताई । जनु महि करति जनक पहुनाई ॥
तब सब लोग नहाइ नहाई । राम जनक मुनि आयसु पाई ॥ ३ ॥
देखि देखि तरुबर अनुरागे । जहँ तहँ पुरजन उतरन लागे ॥
दल फल मूल कंद बिधि नाना । पावन सुंदर सुधा समाना ॥ ४ ॥

By the grace of Srī Rama the hills yielded the objects of one's desire and dispelled one's sorrow by their very sight. The lakes, streams, woods and other parts of the land overflowed as it were with joy and love. The trees and creepers were all laden with fruits and blossoms, while birds and beasts and bees made a melodious concert. The forest was bursting with joy at that time; a cool, soft and fragrant breeze delighted everyone. The loveliness of the forest was past all telling; it seemed as if Earth herself was showing her hospitality to King Janaka. In the meantime all the citizens finished their ablutions and receiving the permission of Śrī Rāma, King Janaka and the sage Vasistha, they gazed with love on the many noble trees and began to encamp here and there; while leaves, fruits, roots and bulbs of every description—pure, lovely and delicious as ambrosia— (1–4)

दो०—सादर सब कहँ रामगुर पठए भरि भरि भार ।
पूजि पितर सुर अतिथि गुर लगे करन फरहार ॥ २७९ ॥

—Were sent to all, in basketfuls, with due courtesy by Vasistha, Srī Rama's preceptor. And having worshipped the manes, the gods, the visitors and the Guru they began to partake of this holy repast. (279)

चौ०—एहि बिधि बासर बीते चारी। रामु निरखि नर नारि सुखारी॥
दुहु समाज असि रुचि मन माहीं। बिनु सिय राम फिरब भल नाहीं॥ १॥
सीता राम संग बनबासू। कोटि अमरपुर सरिस सुपासू॥
परिहरि लखन रामु बैदेही। जेहि घरु भाव बाम बिधि तेही॥ २॥
दाहिन दइउ होइ जब सबही। राम समीप बसिअ बन तबही॥
मंदाकिनि मज्जनु तिहु काला। राम दरसु मुद मंगल माला॥ ३॥
अटनु राम गिरि बन तापस थल। असनु अमिअ सम कंद मूल फल॥
सुख समेत संबत दुइ साता। पल सम होहिं न जनिअहिं जाता॥ ४॥

In this way four days rolled by; the people, both men and women, were gratified to see Śrī Rāma. In both camps the feeling uppermost in the heart of all was: "It is not good to return without Sītā and Rāma. Living in exile in the woods with Sītā and Śrī Rāma one would be millions of times more happy than in Amarāvatī (the city of immortals). Leaving the company of Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma and Sītā he who chooses to live at his home is not favoured by Providence. The privilege of living in close proximity to Śrī Rāma can be had only when God is propitious to us all. Bathing in the Mandākinī thrice every day, the sight of Śrī Rāma, which is a perennial source of joy and blessedness, roaming about on the hill (Kāmadanātha) associated with the name of Śrī Rāma, in the forest adjoining the same and among the hermitages of ascetics situated thereabout, and living on bulbs, roots and fruits delicious like ambrosia ! In this way four years and ten will be happily spent like a minute without our knowing it. (1—4)

दो०—एहि सुख जोग न लोग सब कहहिं कहाँ अस भागु।
सहज सुभायँ समाज दुहु राम चरन अनुरागु॥ २८०॥

"We do not deserve this happiness," all exclaimed; "our luck is not like that." Such was the natural and spontaneous devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet in both the camps. (280)

चौ०—एहि बिधि सकल मनोरथ करहीं। बचन सप्रेम सुनत मन हरहीं॥
सीय मातु तेहि समय पठाईं। दासीं देखि सुअवसरु आईं॥ १॥
सावकास सुनि सब सिय सासू। आयउ जनकराज रनिवासू॥
कौसल्याँ सादर सनमानी। आसन दिए समय सम आनी॥ २॥
सीलु सनेहु सकल दुहु ओरा। द्रवहिं देखि सुनि कुलिस कठोरा॥
पुलक सिथिल तन बारि बिलोचन। महि नख लिखन लगीं सब सोचन॥ ३॥
सब सिय राम प्रीति कि सि मूरति। जनु करुना बहु बेष बिसूरति॥
सीय मातु कह बिधि बुधि बाँकी। जो पय फेनु फोर पबि टाँकी॥ ४॥

In this way all indulged in their own fancy; their affectionate words were so charming to hear. In the meantime Sītā's mother (Queen Sunayanā) despatched her handmaids to King Daśaratha's queens; and perceiving that it was a convenient hour they returned with that information. Having learnt

that Sītā's mothers-in-law were at leisure the ladies of King Janaka's gynaeceum called on them. Queen Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) received them with due honour and courtesy and offered them such seats as circumstances would permit. The amiability and affection of all on both sides were such as would have made even the hardest thunderbolt melt if it could but see or hear of them. With their body thrilling all over and overpowered by emotion and eyes full of tears all began to sorrow and scratch the ground with the nails of their toes. They were all incarnations as it were of love for Sītā and Śrī Rāma; it seemed as if Pathos herself mourned in so many forms. Said Sītā's mother, "The intellect of Providence is so marvellous that He has thought fit to break up the foam of milk with a chisel of adamant! (1—4)

दो०—सुनिअ सुधा देखिअहिं गरल सब करतूति कराल।
जहँ तहँ काक उलूक बक मानस सकृत मराल॥ २८१॥

"We hear of nectar but see only venom: all His doings are hard. Crows, owls and herons are seen everywhere; but swans can be found in the Mānasa lake alone." (281)

चौ०—सुनि ससोच कह देबि सुमित्रा। बिधि गति बड़ि बिपरीत बिचित्रा॥
जो सृजि पालइ हरइ बहोरी। बाल केलि सम बिधि मति भोरी॥ १॥
कौसल्या कह दोसु न काहू। करम बिबस दुख सुख छति लाहू॥
कठिन करम गति जान बिधाता। जो सुभ असुभ सकल फल दाता॥ २॥
ईस रजाइ सीस सबही कें। उतपति थिति लय बिषहु अमी कें॥
देबि मोह बस सोचिअ बादी। बिधि प्रपंचु अस अचल अनादी॥ ३॥
भूपति जिअब मरब उर आनी। सोचिअ सखि लखि निज हित हानी॥
सीय मातु कह सत्य सुबानी। सुकृती अवधि अवधपति रानी॥ ४॥

Hearing this Queen Sumitrā (Lakṣmaṇa's mother) sorrowfully observed, "The ways of Providence are most perverse and strange: He creates, maintains and then destroys. God's designs are as silly as child's play." Said Kausalyā, "It is nobody's fault; sorrow and joy, loss and gain are determined by our past actions. The inexorable ways of Providence are known to God alone, who dispenses all kinds of fruits, both good and evil. God's commands prevail over all, including the processes of creation, maintenance and dissolution and even over poison and nectar (which destroy and restore life respectively). It is no use lamenting, O good lady, out of infatuation. The doings of Providence are, as I have said, immutable and eternal. If we mourn over the contrast between the king's lifetime and his loss, my friend, it is because we see that our interests have suffered on account of his demise." Sītā's mother replied, "Your noble words are quite true, a spouse that you are of Ayodhyā's lord, who was the greatest of all virtuous souls known to history." (1—4)

दो०—लखनु रामु सिय जाहुँ बन भल परिनाम न पोचु।
गहबरि हियँ कह कौसिला मोहि भरत कर सोचु॥ २८२॥

"If Laksmana, Rama and Sīta stay in the forest, the end will be good, not bad. But, said Kausalyā with a heart overwhelmed with emotion, "I am anxious about Bharata. (282)

चौ०—ईस प्रसाद असीस तुम्हारी । सुत सुतबधू देवसरि बारी ॥
राम सपथ मैं कीन्हि न काऊ । सो करि कहउँ सखी सति भाऊ ॥ १ ॥
भरत सील गुन बिनय बड़ाई । भायप भगति भरोस भलाई ॥
कहत सारदहु कर मति हीचे । सागर सीप कि जाहिं उलीचे ॥ २ ॥
जानउँ सदा भरत कुलदीपा । बार बार मोहि कहेउ महीपा ॥
कसें कनकु मनि पारिखि पाएँ । पुरुष परिखिअहिं समयँ सुभाएँ ॥ ३ ॥
अनुचित आजु कहब अस मोरा । सोक सनेहँ सयानप थोरा ॥
सुनि सुरसरि सम पावनि बानी । भईं सनेह बिकल सब रानी ॥ ४ ॥

"By the grace of God and through your blessings my sons and daughters-in-law are all pure as the water of the celestial stream (Ganga). Although I have never sworn by Rāma, I now swear by him and tell you in good faith, my friend, that in extolling Bharata's amiability, goodness, modesty, loftiness of character, brotherly affection, devotion, faith and nobility the wit of even Śāradā (the goddess of speech) falters. Can the ocean be ladled out by means of an oyster-shell ? I have always known Bharata to be the glory of his house and the king repeatedly told me so. Gold is tested by rubbing on the touchstone, and a precious stone on reaching the hands of an expert jeweller; while men are tested in times of emergency by their innate disposition. It was wrong on my part today to have spoken thus; but you know sorrow and affection leave one little reason." On hearing these words, pure as the water of the celestial river, all the queens were overwhelmed with affection. (1—4)

दो०—कौसल्या कह धीर धरि सुनहु देबि मिथिलेसि ।
को बिबेकनिधि बल्लभहि तुम्हहि सकइ उपदेसि ॥ २८३ ॥

Kausalya collected herself and continued: "Listen, O venerable queen of Mithilā: who can advise you, the consort of King Janaka, who is an ocean of wisdom ? (283)

चौ०—रानि राय सन अवसरु पाई । अपनी भाँति कहब समुझाई ॥
रखिअहिं लखनु भरतु गवनहिं बन । जौं यह मत मानै महीप मन ॥ १ ॥
तौ भल जतनु करब सुबिचारी । मोरें सोचु भरत कर भारी ॥
गूढ़ सनेह भरत मन माहीं । रहें नीक मोहि लागत नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
लखि सुभाउ सुनि सरल सुबानी । सब भइ मगन करुन रस रानी ॥
नभ प्रसून झरि धन्य धन्य धुनि । सिथिल सनेहँ सिद्ध जोगी मुनि ॥ ३ ॥
सबु रनिवासु बिथकि लखि रहेऊ । तब धरि धीर सुमित्राँ कहेऊ ॥
देबि दंड जुग जामिनि बीती । राम मातु सुनि उठी सप्रीती ॥ ४ ॥

"Yet, finding a suitable opportunity, queen, you may speak to the king as if on your own initiative and plead with him that Laksmana may be detained

and Bharata allowed to proceed to the forest. Should this proposal find favour with the king, let him do his utmost after due deliberation. I feel much concerned about Bharata; for the love in his heart is so profound that if he stays at home I fear some thing untoward may happen to him." Perceiving Kausalyā's pure love and hearing her guileless and eloquent appeal all the queens were overwhelmed by the pathetic sentiment. There was a shower of flowers from heaven accompanied by shouts of applause. Accomplished saints, Yogīs (mystics) and hermits were overpowered with emotion. All the ladies of the gynaeceum were struck dumb to see this. Then, recovering herself, Sumitrā interposed, "Madam! Nearly an hour of the night has passed." Hearing this Śrī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) courteously rose, and—(1—4)

दो०—बेगि पाउ धारिअ थलहि कह सनेहँ सतिभाय ।
हमरें तौ अब ईस गति कै मिथिलेस सहाय ॥ २८४ ॥

—Said out of affection and goodwill, "Pray return quickly to your camp. Our only refuge now is God and our only helper is the lord of Mithilā." (284)

चौ०—लखि सनेह सुनि बचन बिनीता । जनकप्रिया गह पाय पुनीता ॥
देबि उचित असि बिनय तुम्हारी । दसरथ घरिनि राम महतारी ॥ १ ॥
प्रभु अपने नीचहु आदरहीं । अगिनि धूम गिरि सिर तिनु धरहीं ॥
सेवकु राउ करम मन बानी । सदा सहाय महेसु भवानी ॥ २ ॥
रउरे अंग जोगु जग को है । दीप सहाय कि दिनकर सोहै ॥
रामु जाइ बनु करि सुर काजू । अचल अवधपुर करिहहिं राजू ॥ ३ ॥
अमर नाग नर राम बाहुबल । सुख बसिहहिं अपनें अपनें थल ॥
यह सब जागबलिक कहि राखा । देबि न होइ मुधा मुनि भाषा ॥ ४ ॥

Seeing her affection and hearing her polite words Janaka's beloved queen (Sunayanā) clasped Kausalyā's holy feet. "Such modesty on your part, O venerable lady, is quite becoming of you, you being King Daśaratha's spouse and Śrī Rāma's mother. Great men treat with honour even the lowest of their servants: fire is crowned with smoke, while mountains bear grass on their tops. The king (of Mithilā) is your servant in thought, word and deed; while the great Lord Śiva and His Consort (Bhavānī) are your constant helpers. Who on this earth is worthy of serving as your auxiliary? Can an ordinary light ever pose with any grace as a helper of the sun? After serving the term of his exile in the woods and accomplishing the object of the gods Śrī Rāma will reign undisturbed at Ayodhyā; and protected by Śrī Rāma's strength of arm gods, Nāgas and human beings will dwell peacefully in their own abodes. This has all been predicted by the sage Yājñavalkya and a sage's prophesy, madam, can never go in vain." (1—4)

दो०—अस कहि पग परि पेम अति सिय हित बिनय सुनाइ ।
सिय समेत सियमातु तब चली सुआयसु पाइ ॥ २८५ ॥

So saying she fell at Kausalyā's feet with the utmost affection and preferred her request for being allowed to take Sītā with her. And having received Kausalyā's kind permission Sītā's mother now left for her camp with Sītā. (285)

चौ०—प्रिय परिजनहि मिली बैदेही । जो जेहि जोगु भाँति तेहि तेही ॥
तापस बेष जानकी देखी । भा सबु बिकल बिषाद बिसेषी ॥ १ ॥
जनक राम गुर आयसु पाई । चले थलहि सिय देखी आई ॥
लीन्हि लाइ उर जनक जानकी । पाहुनि पावन पेम प्रान की ॥ २ ॥
उर उमगेउ अंबुधि अनुरागू । भयउ भूप मनु मनहुँ पयागू ॥
सिय सनेह बटु बाढ़त जोहा । ता पर राम पेम सिसु सोहा ॥ ३ ॥
चिरजीवी मुनि ग्यान बिकल जनु । बूड़त लहेउ बाल अवलंबनु ॥
मोह मगन मति नहिं बिदेह की । महिमा सिय रघुबर सनेह की ॥ ४ ॥

Videha's Daughter (Sītā) greeted Her dear kinsfolk in the same manner as was befitting in each case. When they saw Jānakī (Janaka's Daughter) in the robes of an ascetic everybody was stricken with deep sorrow. Receiving the permission of Śrī Rāma's preceptor, Vasiṣṭha, King Janaka too left for his camp and on arrival found Sītā there. The king clasped Jānakī to his bosom,—Jānakī who was an honoured guest of his unalloyed love and life. In his heart welled up an ocean of love and the king's heart now appeared like the holy Prayāga. The immortal banyan tree in the shape of affection for Sītā was seen growing with the divine babe of love for Śrī Rāma adorning its top. The long-lived sage (Mārkaṇḍeya)* in the shape of King Janaka's wisdom was greatly bewildered and was just going to be drowned when lo! he found his support in the divine babe and was saved. Really speaking, it was not that Videha's wit was lost in infatuation; it was the triumph of the affection he bore for Sītā and the Chief of Raghus. (1—4)

दो०—सिय पितु मातु सनेह बस बिकल न सकी सँभारि ।
धरनिसुताँ धीरजु धरेउ समउ सुधरमु बिचारि ॥ २८६ ॥

* The story of Mārkaṇḍeya has been told at length in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* (XII. 8—10). He is celebrated for his longevity (which will continue till the end of this Kalpa), which has earned for him the title of 'Chirajivi'. Won over by his austerities and devotion Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa appeared in person before him and offered to grant him a boon. The sage, however, requested that he might be allowed to witness the glory of His Māyā. The Lord disappeared, assuring the sage that his prayer would be granted.

One evening, while the sage was engaged in his devotions on the bank of the Puṣpabhadrā river, it began to rain in torrents. The oceans outstepped their limits and deluged the earth as well as the heavens. Even though he was an enlightened soul, the sage was much confused and alarmed; and tossed about by the furious waves and blasting winds he drifted along like a blind man for a long time. At last he espied a small island on which stood a young banyan tree. On the tree itself he saw, lying in a cup of leaves, a most charming babe of dark hue, holding in both of its tiny hands one of its great toes and sucking it. The sage was enraptured to behold this extraordinary babe and at its very sight all his fatigue and pain disappeared. As the sage tried to approach the babe he was drawn by the breath of its nostrils into its stomach and saw the whole universe contained therein. After wandering there for a long time he was expelled from the stomach with the breath and found himself once more in the endless ocean with the banyan tree and the beautiful babe still before his eyes. The sage made one more attempt to approach the babe, when lo! the babe disappeared and the great deluge also vanished out of sight.

Overcome by the affection of Her parents Sītā was too deeply moved to control Herself. But realizing the awkward moment and Her noble duty, Earth's Daughter recovered Herself. (286)

चौ०—तापस बेष जनक सिय देखी। भयउ पेमु परितोषु बिसेषी ॥
पुत्रि पबित्र किए कुल दोऊ। सुजस धवल जगु कह सबु कोऊ ॥ १ ॥
जिति सुरसरि कीरति सरि तोरी। गवनु कीन्ह बिधि अंड करोरी ॥
गंग अवनि थल तीनि बड़ेरे। एहिं किए साधु समाज घनेरे ॥ २ ॥
पितु कह सत्य सनेहँ सुबानी। सीय सकुच महुँ मनहुँ समानी ॥
पुनि पितु मातु लीन्हि उर लाई। सिख आसिष हित दीन्हि सुहाई ॥ ३ ॥
कहति न सीय सकुचि मन माहीं। इहाँ बसब रजनीं भल नाहीं ॥
लखि रुख रानि जनायउ राऊ। हृदयँ सराहत सीलु सुभाऊ ॥ ४ ॥

When King Janaka beheld Sītā in the robes of a hermitess he was overwhelmed with love and was highly gratified. "Daughter, you have brought sanctity to both the houses (viz., my house and the house of your husband); everyone says your fair renown has illumined the whole world. The river of your fame outshone the celestial stream (Gaṅgā) in that it has penetrated (not only one solar system but) millions of universes. While the Gaṅgā has (in the course of its career) exalted only three places,* the river of your fame has added to the glory of numerous congregations of holy men." Even though Her father made these flowery yet truthful remarks out of affection for Her, Sītā was drowned as it were in a sea of bashfulness. Her parents pressed Her to their bosom once more and gave Her good and salutary advice and blessings. Sītā did not speak but felt uncomfortable in Her mind because She thought that it was not good to remain with Her parents overnight. Reading Her mind the queen (Sunayanā) made it known to the king (her husband) and both admired in their heart Her modesty and noble disposition. (1—4)

दो०—बार बार मिलि भेंटि सिय बिदा कीन्हि सनमानि।
कही समय सिर भरत गति रानि सुबानि सयानि ॥ २८७ ॥

Meeting and embracing Sītā again and again they politely allowed Her to depart and availing herself of this opportunity the clever queen eloquently told the king all about Bharata's condition. (287)

चौ०—सुनि भूपाल भरत ब्यवहारू। सोन सुगंध सुधा ससि सारू ॥
मूदे सजल नयन पुलके तन। सुजसु सराहन लगे मुदित मन ॥ १ ॥
सावधान सुनु सुमुखि सुलोचनि। भरत कथा भव बंध बिमोचनि ॥
धरम राजनय ब्रह्मबिचारू। इहाँ जथामति मोर प्रचारू ॥ २ ॥

---

* The three places referred to above are evidently (1) Haridwar (where the Gaṅgā leaves the mountainous region and descends into the plains), (2) Prayāga (where it is joined by another sacred river, the Yamunā) and (3) the mouth of the river (popularly known by the name of Gaṅgāsāgar)

सो मति मोरि भरत महिमाही। कहै काह छलि छुअति न छाँही ॥
बिधि गनपति अहिपति सिव सारद। कबि कोबिद बुध बुद्धि बिसारद ॥ ३ ॥
भरत चरित कीरति करतूती। धरम सील गुन बिमल बिभूती ॥
समुझत सुनत सुखद सब काहू। सुचि सुरसरि रुचि निदर सुधाहू ॥ ४ ॥

When the king heard of Bharata's conduct, which was rare as a combination of gold with fragrance or as nectar extracted from the moon,* the king closed his tearful eyes and a thrill ran through his body as he broke out into ecstatic praises of his bright glory. "Listen attentively, O fair-faced and bright-eyed lady; the story of Bharata loosens the bonds of worldly existence. Religion, statecraft and an enquiry about Brahma (the Infinite) are domains to which I have some access according to my own poor lights. But though acquainted with these subjects, my wits cannot touch the shadow of Bharata's glory even by trick, much less describe it. To Brahmā (the Creator), Lord Gaṇapati (Gaṇeśa), Śeṣa (the king of serpents), Lord Śiva, Śāradā (the goddess of learning), seers, sages and wise men and others who are clever in judgment, the story, fame, doings, piety, amiability, goodness and unsullied glory of Bharata are delightful to hear and appreciate. They surpass the celestial stream in purity and even nectar in taste. (1—4)

दो०—निरवधि गुन निरुपम पुरुषु भरतु भरत सम जानि।
कहिअ सुमेरु कि सेर सम कबिकुल मति सकुचानि ॥ २८८ ॥

"Possessed of infinite virtues and a man above comparison, know Bharata alone to be the like of Bharata. Can Mount Sumeru be likened to a seer?† Hence the wit of the race of poets was confused (in finding a comparison for him). (288)

चौ०—अगम सबहि बरनत बरबरनी। जिमि जलहीन मीन गमु धरनी ॥
भरत अमित महिमा सुनु रानी। जानहिं रामु न सकहिं बखानी ॥ १ ॥
बरनि सप्रेम भरत अनुभाऊ। तिय जिय की रुचि लखि कह राऊ ॥
बहुरहिं लखनु भरतु बन जाहीं। सब कर भल सब के मन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
देबि परंतु भरत रघुबर की। प्रीति प्रतीति जाइ नहिं तरकी ॥
भरतु अवधि सनेह ममता की। जद्यपि रामु सीम समता की ॥ ३ ॥
परमारथ स्वारथ सुख सारे। भरत न सपनेहुँ मनहुँ निहारे ॥
साधन सिद्धि राम पग नेहू। मोहि लखि परत भरत मत एहू ॥ ४ ॥

"The greatness of Bharata, O fair lady, baffles all who attempt to describe it, even as a fish cannot glide on dry land. Listen, O beloved queen: Bharata's inestimable glory is known to Śrī Rāma alone; but he too cannot describe it." Having thus lovingly described Bharata's glory the king, who knew his queen's mind, continued, "If Lakṣmaṇa returns to Ayodhyā and Bharata accompanies Śrī

* Nectar as found in the region of Nāgas etc. is itself rare; but that which forms the essence of the moon is even rarer. Hence the conduct of Bharata has been likened to the same

† An Indian weight, nearly equivalent to 2 pounds.

Rāma to the woods, it will be well for all and that is what everyone wants. But the mutual affection and confidence, O good lady, of Bharata and Śrī Rāma (the chief of Raghus) are beyond one's conception. Even though Śrī Rāma is the highest example of even-mindedness, Bharata is the perfection of love and attachment. Bharata has never bestowed any thought on his spiritual or worldly interests or personal comforts. Devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet is at once the means and the end: to my mind this appears to sum up Bharata's creed. (1–4)

दो०—भोरेहुँ भरत न पेलिहहिं मनसहुँ राम रजाइ।
करिअ न सोचु सनेह बस कहेउ भूप बिलखाइ ॥ २८९ ॥

"Bharata would never think of flouting Śrī Rāma's orders even unwittingly. We need not, therefore, in our affection give way to anxiety," said the king in choked accents. (289)

चौ०—राम भरत गुन गनत सप्रीती। निसि दंपतिहि पलक सम बीती ॥
राज समाज प्रात जुग जागे। न्हाइ न्हाइ सुर पूजन लागे ॥ १ ॥
गे नहाइ गुर पहिं रघुराई। बंदि चरन बोले रुख पाई ॥
नाथ भरतु पुरजन महतारी। सोक बिकल बनबास दुखारी ॥ २ ॥
सहित समाज राउ मिथिलेसू। बहुत दिवस भए सहत कलेसू ॥
उचित होइ सोइ कीजिअ नाथा। हित सबही कर रौरें हाथा ॥ ३ ॥
अस कहि अति सकुचे रघुराऊ। मुनि पुलके लखि सीलु सुभाऊ ॥
तुम्ह बिनु राम सकल सुख साजा। नरक सरिस दुहु राज समाजा ॥ ४ ॥

As the king and queen (Janaka and Sunayanā) were thus fondly recounting the virtues of Śrī Rāma and Bharata the night passed like an instant. At daybreak both the royal camps awoke and after finishing their ablutions proceeded to worship gods. Performing His ablutions the Lord of Raghus called on His Guru and after adoring his feet and receiving his tacit permission said, "Holy sir, Bharata, the citizens and my mothers are all stricken with grief and inconvenienced by their sojourn in the woods. The king of Mithilā too and his followers have been enduring hardships for many days past. Therefore, my lord, do what is advisable under the circumstances. The welfare of all lies in your hands." So saying Śrī Rāma felt much embarrassed. And the sage was thrilled with joy when he saw His amiability and kind disposition. "Without you, Rāma, all amenities of life are like hell to both the royal camps. (1–4)

दो०—प्रान प्रान के जीव के जिव सुख के सुख राम।
तुम्ह तजि तात सोहात गृह जिन्हहि तिन्हहि बिधि बाम ॥ २९० ॥

"Rāma! you are the life of life, the soul of soul and the joy of joy. Those who like to be in their home away from you, my child, are under the influence of an adverse fate (290)

चौ०—सो सुखु करमु धरमु जरि जाऊ। जहँ न राम पद पंकज भाऊ ॥
जोगु कुजोगु ग्यानु अग्यानू। जहँ नहिं राम पेम परधानू ॥ १ ॥

तुम्ह बिनु दुखी सुखी तुम्ह तेहीं । तुम्ह जानहु जिय जो जेहि केहीं ॥
राउर आयसु सिर सबही कें । बिदित कृपालहि गति सब नीकें ॥ २ ॥
आपु आश्रमहि धारिअ पाऊ । भयउ सनेह सिथिल मुनिराऊ ॥
करि प्रनामु तब रामु सिधाए । रिषि धरि धीर जनक पहिं आए ॥ ३ ॥
राम बचन गुरु नृपहि सुनाए । सील सनेह सुभायँ सुहाए ॥
महाराज अब कीजिअ सोई । सब कर धरम सहित हित होई ॥ ४ ॥

"Perish the happiness, ritual and piety in which there is no devotion to the lotus feet of Rāma (yourself). That Yoga (discipline conducive to union with God) is an abominable Yoga and that wisdom unwisdom, in which love for Rāma (yourself) is not supreme. Whosoever is unhappy is unhappy without you and even so whoever is happy is happy through you. You know what exists in the mind of a particular individual. Your command holds sway over all and your gracious self knows all the ways full well. You may return to your hermitage now." The lord of sages was overpowered with emotion. Śrī Rāma then made obeisance and departed, while the sage collected himself and called on King Janaka. The preceptor repeated to the king Śrī Rāma's naturally graceful words, which were full of amiability and affection, and added, "O great monarch, now do that which may do good to all without prejudice to religion. (1—4)

दो०—ग्यान निधान सुजान सुचि धरम धीर नरपाल ।
तुम्ह बिनु असमंजस समन को समरथ एहि काल ॥ २९१ ॥

"O king ! you are a storehouse of wisdom, clever, pious and staunch in upholding the cause of virtue. Who save you is able at the present moment to find a way out of this impasse ?" (291)

चौ०—सुनि मुनि बचन जनक अनुरागे । लखि गति ग्यानु बिरागु बिरागे ॥
सिथिल सनेहँ गुनत मन माहीं । आए इहाँ कीन्ह भल नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
रामहि रायँ कहेउ बन जाना । कीन्ह आपु प्रिय प्रेम प्रवाना ॥
हम अब बन तें बनहि पठाई । प्रमुदित फिरब बिबेक बड़ाई ॥ २ ॥
तापस मुनि महिसुर सुनि देखी । भए प्रेम बस बिकल बिसेषी ॥
समउ समुझि धरि धीरजु राजा । चले भरत पहिं सहित समाजा ॥ ३ ॥
भरत आइ आगें भइ लीन्हे । अवसर सरिस सुआसन दीन्हे ॥
तात भरत कह तेरहुति राऊ । तुम्हहि बिदित रघुबीर सुभाऊ ॥ ४ ॥

Janaka was overwhelmed with emotion on hearing the sage's words. His wisdom and dispassion themselves shrunk away from him when they saw his condition. Faint with love he reasoned to himself, "I have not done well in coming over to this place. King Daśaratha no doubt told Śrī Rāma to proceed to the woods; but at the same time he demonstrated the love he bore towards his beloved son. As for ourselves we shall now send him from this forest to another and return in triumph glorying over our wisdom !"

Seeing and hearing all this the ascetics, hermits and the Brahmans were overwhelmed with emotion. Realizing the situation, the king took heart and proceeded with his followers to see Bharata; while the latter came ahead to receive him and gave him the best seat available in the circumstances. "Dear Bharata," said the king of Tirhut, "you know the disposition of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line). (1—4)

दो०—राम सत्यब्रत धरम रत सब कर सीलु सनेहु ।
संकट सहत सकोच बस कहिअ जो आयसु देहु ॥ २९२ ॥

"Śrī Rāma is true to his vow and devoted to his duty; he respects the feelings and affection of all. It is on account of this consideration for others' feelings that he has to suffer mental torture. Now give me your final word, so that the same may be communicated to him." (292)

चौ०—सुनि तन पुलकि नयन भरि बारी । बोले भरतु धीर धरि भारी ॥
प्रभु प्रिय पूज्य पिता सम आपू । कुलगुरु सम हित माय न बापू ॥ १ ॥
कौसिकादि मुनि सचिव समाजू । ग्यान अंबुनिधि आपुनु आजू ॥
सिसु सेवकु आयसु अनुगामी । जानि मोहि सिख देइअ स्वामी ॥ २ ॥
एहिं समाज थल बूझब राउर । मौन मलिन मैं बोलब बाउर ॥
छोटे बदन कहउँ बड़ि बाता । छमब तात लखि बाम बिधाता ॥ ३ ॥
आगम निगम प्रसिद्ध पुराना । सेवाधरमु कठिन जगु जाना ॥
स्वामि धरम स्वारथहि बिरोधू । बैरु अंध प्रेमहि न प्रबोधू ॥ ४ ॥

When Bharata heard these words, a thrill ran through his body and his eyes filled with tears. Imposing a great restraint upon himself he said, "My lord, you are dear and worthy of respect to me as my own father; and as regards my family preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha) my own parents are not so benevolent to me as he. Here is an assembly of sages like Kauśika (Viśwāmitra) as well as of ministers; and today you too, an ocean of wisdom, are present in our midst. Know me to be a mere child and an obedient servant and instruct me accordingly, my master. To think that you should seek my advice in this assembly (of wise men) and at this holy place ! Yet if I keep mum I shall be considered black of heart; and if I speak on this occasion it will be sheer madness on my part. Nevertheless I have the impudence to say some thing. Therefore, pray forgive me, father, knowing that Providence is against me. It is fully recognized in the Tantras, Vedas and Puranas, and all the world knows, that the duty of a servant is hard indeed. Duty to a master is incompatible with selfishness. Hatred is blind and love is not discreet. (1—4)

दो०—राखि राम रुख धरमु ब्रतु पराधीन मोहि जानि ।
सब कें संमत सर्ब हित करिअ पेमु पहिचानि ॥ २९३ ॥

"Therefore, knowing me to be a dependant, and with due deference to Śrī Rāma's wishes and consistent with his duty and sacred vow, pray do that

which all approve and is good for all, recognizing the affection everyone bears for him." (293)

चौ०—भरत बचन सुनि देखि सुभाऊ। सहित समाज सराहत राऊ॥
सुगम अगम मृदु मंजु कठोरे। अरथु अमित अति आखर थोरे॥ १॥
ज्यों मुखु मुकुर मुकुरु निज पानी। गहि न जाइ अस अदभुत बानी॥
भूप भरतु मुनि सहित समाजू। गे जहँ बिबुध कुमुद द्विजराजू॥ २॥
सुनि सुधि सोच बिकल सब लोगा। मनहुँ मीनगन नव जल जोगा॥
देवँ प्रथम कुलगुर गति देखी। निरखि बिदेह सनेह बिसेषी॥ ३॥
राम भगतिमय भरतु निहारे। सुर स्वारथी हहरि हियँ हारे॥
सब कोउ राम पेममय पेखा। भए अलेख सोच बस लेखा॥ ४॥

On hearing Bharata's words and observing his disposition King Janaka and his followers applauded him. Easily intelligible yet incomprehensible, soft and sweet yet hard, pregnant with a vast meaning though too concise, his mysterious speech was as baffling as the reflection of one's face seen in a mirror, which cannot be grasped even though the mirror be held in one's own hand. King Janaka, Bharata, the sage (Vasiṣṭha) and the whole assembly called on Śrī Rāma, who delights the gods even as the moon brings joy to the lilies. On hearing this news all the people were overwhelmed with anxiety even as fish on coming in contact with the water of the first shower (of the monsoon). The gods first observed the condition of the family preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha) and next watched the great affection of King Videha. And then they beheld Bharata, the very incarnation of devotion to Śrī Rāma. Seeing all this the selfish gods felt unnerved and lost heart. When they saw everyone full of love for Śrī Rama, the gods were immensely perturbed. (1–4)

दो०—रामु सनेह सकोच बस कह ससोच सुरराजु।
रचहु प्रपंचहि पंच मिलि नाहिं त भयउ अकाजु॥ २९४॥

"Śrī Rāma is full of love and consideration for others' feelings," Indra (the lord of celestials) sorrowfully said. "Therefore, combine to contrive some underhand plot all of you; or else we are doomed." (294)

चौ०—सुरन्ह सुमिरि सारदा सराही। देबि देव सरनागत पाही॥
फेरि भरत मति करि निज माया। पालु बिबुध कुल करि छल छाया॥ १॥
बिबुध बिनय सुनि देबि सयानी। बोली सुर स्वारथ जड़ जानी॥
मो सन कहहु भरत मति फेरू। लोचन सहस न सूझ सुमेरू॥ २॥
बिधि हरि हर माया बड़ि भारी। सोउ न भरत मति सकइ निहारी॥
सो मति मोहि कहत करु भोरी। चंदिनि कर कि चंडकर चोरी॥ ३॥
भरत हृदयँ सिय राम निवासू। तहँ कि तिमिर जहँ तरनि प्रकासू॥
अस कहि सारद गइ बिधि लोका। बिबुध बिकल निसि मानहुँ कोका॥ ४॥

The gods invoked goddess Śāradā and praised her. They said, "O goddess, we celestials have sought refuge in you; pray protect us. Change Bharata's mind by exerting your Māyā (deluding potency) and preserve the heavenly race from ruin by taking them under the cool shade of some deceptive trick." When the wise goddess heard the gods' prayer, she understood that selfishness had robbed them of their senses, and accordingly replied (turning towards Indra in particular), "You ask me to alter Bharata's mind! It is a pity you cannot see Mount Meru even though you possess a thousand eyes. The Māyā (deluding potency) even of Brahmā (the Creator), Hari (the Preserver) and Hara (the Destroyer of the universe), exceedingly powerful as it is, cannot even face Bharata's reason. And yet you ask me to pervert it. What! Can the moonlight steal away the sun? Bharata's heart is the abode of Sītā and Śrī Rāma; can darkness enter where the sun shines?" So saying goddess Śāradā returned to Brahmā's heaven, leaving the gods as distressed as the Chakrawāka bird at night. (1—4)

दो०—सुर स्वारथी मलीन मन कीन्ह कुमंत्र कुठाटु ।
रचि प्रपंच माया प्रबल भय भ्रम अरति उचाटु ॥ २९५ ॥

The gods, who were selfish by nature and malicious at heart, laid an ill-conceived plot and weaving a powerful net of deceptive artifice set up a wave of fear, confusion, ennui and vexation (among the people of Ayodhyā). (295)

चौ०—करि कुचालि सोचत सुरराजू । भरत हाथ सबु काजु अकाजू ॥
गए जनकु रघुनाथ समीपा । सनमाने सब रबिकुल दीपा ॥ १ ॥
समय समाज धरम अबिरोधा । बोले तब रघुबंस पुरोधा ॥
जनक भरत संबादु सुनाई । भरत कहाउति कही सुहाई ॥ २ ॥
तात राम जस आयसु देहू । सो सबु करै मोर मत एहू ॥
सुनि रघुनाथ जोरि जुग पानी । बोले सत्य सरल मृदु बानी ॥ ३ ॥
बिद्यमान आपुनि मिथिलेसू । मोर कहब सब भाँति भदेसू ॥
राउर राय रजायसु होई । राउरि सपथ सही सिर सोई ॥ ४ ॥

Having started the mischief the lord of celestials thought within himself that the success and failure of his plans lay in Bharata's hands. (Now reverting to Chitrakūṭa) when King Janaka went to the Lord of Raghus, the Glory of the solar race received them all with honour. The priest of Raghu's line then spoke words which were appropriate to the occasion as well as to the assembly in which he spoke and consistent with righteousness. He reproduced the conversation that had taken place between King Janaka and Bharata and also repeated the charming speech of Bharata. "Dear Rāma," he said, "whatever order you give all should obey: this is my proposal." Hearing this the Lord of Raghus, with joined palms and in gentle accents, spoke words which were true and guileless: "In the presence of yourself and the lord of Mithilā it will be altogether unseemly on my part to say anything. Whatever order may be given by you and by the king of Mithilā, everyone, I swear by yourself, will positively bow to it." (1—4)

दो०—राम सपथ सुनि मुनि जनकु सकुचे सभा समेत ।
सकल बिलोकत भरत मुखु बनइ न ऊतरु देत ॥ २९६ ॥

On hearing Śrī Rāma's oath the sage Vasiṣṭha and King Janaka as well as the whole assembly were embarrassed. All fixed their eyes on Bharata, as no one could make any answer. (296)

चौ०—सभा सकुच बस भरत निहारी । रामबंधु धरि धीरजु भारी ॥
कुसमउ देखि सनेहु सँभारा । बढ़त बिंधि जिमि घटज निवारा ॥ १ ॥
सोक कनकलोचन मति छोनी । हरी बिमल गुन गन जगजोनी ॥
भरत बिबेक बराहँ बिसाला । अनायास उधरी तेहि काला ॥ २ ॥
करि प्रनामु सब कहँ कर जोरे । रामु राउ गुर साधु निहोरे ॥
छमब आजु अति अनुचित मोरा । कहउँ बदन मृदु बचन कठोरा ॥ ३ ॥
हियँ सुमिरी सारदा सुहाई । मानस तें मुख पंकज आई ॥
बिमल बिबेक धरम नय साली । भरत भारती मंजु मराली ॥ ४ ॥

When Bharata saw the assembly confused, Srī Rama's brother exercised great self-restraint and realizing the unfavourable situation he controlled his emotion even as the jar-born sage Agastya* had arrested the growth of the Vindhya range. The demon Hiranyāksa in the form of grief had carried away the globe in the shape of the assembly's wit, which was the source of the entire creation in the form of a host of virtues when the gigantic boar of Bharata's discretion playfully delivered the same in no time . Bharata bowed his head and joined his palms before all and thus prayed to Śrī Rāma, King Janaka, his preceptor (the sage Vasistha) and other holy men present there "With my juvenile lips I am going to make a harsh statement. Kindly forgive today this most unbecoming act of mine." He now invoked in his heart the charming goddess Sarada, who came from the Mānasarovara lake of his mind to his lotus-like mouth. Bharata's speech, which was full of pure wisdom, piety and prudence, resembled a lovely cygnet (in that it possessed the virtue of sifting goodness from evil) (1—4)

---

* In the *Mahābhārata* (*Vanaparva*, Ch. 104) we read how the sun-god, who perambulates Mount Sumeru every day, was once asked by the deity presiding over the Vindhya range to revolve round that mountain as well. The sun-god, however, declined on the plea that his course had been determined by the Lord of the universe and that he could not deviate from the same. This enraged Vindhya, who grew taller and taller in order to impede the course of the sun and the moon. Alarmed at this the gods sought the help of the mighty sage Agastya, who approached Vindhya, and asked the mountain-spirit to allow him passage for proceeding to the south. Vindhya accordingly prostrated himself before the sage and thus made it easy for him to cross it. The sage bound him on oath to remain in that position till his return. He, however, never returned from the south since then and the mountain has remained in that position till now. In this way he was able to arrest the heavenward growth of the mountain.

The metaphor has been taken from the story of Hiraṇyakṣa, which has been told at length in *Śrīmad Bhagavata* (Book III., Ch. 13, 18 and 19). At the beginning of creation when Manu and Satarupa took their descent from Brahmā, the couple asked their progenitor to allot them their duty. Brahma asked them to procreate and thus propagate the human species. Manu, however, saw that

दो॰—निरखि बिबेक बिलोचनन्हि सिथिल सनेहँ समाजु।
करि प्रनामु बोले भरतु सुमिरि सीय रघुराजु ॥ २९७ ॥

Bharata saw with the eyes of his wisdom that the assembly was faint with love. He, therefore, made obeisance to all and, invoking Sītā and the Lord of Raghus, spoke as follows:— (297)

चौ॰—प्रभु पितु मातु सुहृद गुर स्वामी। पूज्य परम हित अंतरजामी ॥
सरल सुसाहिबु सील निधानू। प्रनतपाल सर्बग्य सुजानू ॥ १ ॥
समरथ सरनागत हितकारी। गुनगाहकु अवगुन अघ हारी ॥
स्वामि गोसाँइहि सरिस गोसाईं। मोहि समान मैं साइँ दोहाईं ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु पितु बचन मोह बस पेली। आयउँ इहाँ समाजु सकेली ॥
जग भल पोच ऊँच अरु नीचू। अमिअ अमरपद माहुरु मीचू ॥ ३ ॥
राम रजाइ मेट मन माहीं। देखा सुना कतहुँ कोउ नाहीं ॥
सो मैं सब बिधि कीन्हि ढिठाई। प्रभु मानी सनेह सेवकाई ॥ ४ ॥

"O lord, you are my father, mother, friend, preceptor, master, the object of my adoration, my greatest benefactor and my inner controller. Nay, you are a guileless and kind patron, the storehouse of amiability, the protector of the suppliant, all-knowing, clever, all-powerful, the befriender of those who take refuge in you, quick to appreciate merit and drive away vice and sin. You are the only master like you, my lord; while I am unique in disloyalty to my master. Setting at naught in my folly the commands of my lord (yourself) and my father I came here with a multitude of men and women. In this world there are good men and vile, high and low, nectar and immortality, on the one hand, and venom and death on the other. But nowhere have I seen or heard anyone who dare violate Śrī Rāma's (your) orders even in thought. Yet that is what I have presumed to do not only in thought but even in word and deed and my lord has taken this presumption on my part as a token of affection and an act of service. (1—4)

दो॰—कृपाँ भलाईं आपनी नाथ कीन्ह भल मोर।
दूषन भे भूषन सरिस सुजसु चारु चहु ओर ॥ २९८ ॥

---

the globe lay submerged under water, and thus found no solid ground to stand upon. He complained about it to Brahmā, who became thoughtful and began to meditate. And presently a tiny boar of the size of a human thumb issued from one of his nostrils and in the twinkling of an eye assumed the dimensions of a huge mountain. Brahmā and His mind-born sons, Marichi and others, at first wondered who the creature was; but at last they concluded that the Lord Himself had taken that form in order to remove their anxiety. In the meantime the divine Boar dived into the ocean that had swallowed the earth at the time of the final dissolution and presently emerged from it with the earth held secure on His tusks.

The demon Hiraṇyākṣa, who had already learnt that the boar was no other than the almighty Lord Viṣṇu, appeared before the Lord, mace in hand, and challenged Him to a duel. The Lord placed the earth on the water, propped it against His own sustaining power and turning towards the demon slew him after a hard struggle.

"By his grace and goodness my lord has done me a good turn; my failings have become my adornments and my fair and bright renown has spread on all sides. (298)

चौ०—राउरि रीति सुबानि बड़ाई । जगत बिदित निगमागम गाई ॥
कूर कुटिल खल कुमति कलंकी । नीच निसील निरीस निसंकी ॥ १ ॥
तेउ सुनि सरन सामुहें आए । सकृत प्रनामु किहें अपनाए ॥
देखि दोष कबहुँ न उर आने । सुनि गुन साधु समाज बखाने ॥ २ ॥
को साहिब सेवकहि नेवाजी । आपु समाज साज सब साजी ॥
निज करतूति न समुझिअ सपनें । सेवक सकुच सोचु उर अपनें ॥ ३ ॥
सो गोसाइँ नहिं दूसर कोपी । भुजा उठाइ कहउँ पन रोपी ॥
पसु नाचत सुक पाठ प्रबीना । गुन गति नट पाठक आधीना ॥ ४ ॥

"Your ways, your noble disposition and your greatness are known throughout the world and have been glorified in the Vedas and other sacred books. Even the cruel, the perverse, the vile, the evil-minded and the censured, nay, the low-minded, the impudent, the godless and the unscrupulous are known to have been accepted by you as your own as soon as you heard that they had approached you for shelter and if they merely bowed to you only once. You have never taken their faults to heart even if you saw them with your own eyes; while you have proclaimed their virtues in the assembly of holy men if you but heard of them. Where is the master, so kind to his servant, who would provide him with all his necessaries himself and, far from reckoning even in a dream what he has done for his servant would feel troubled at heart over any embarrassment caused to him? He is my lord (yourself) and no other: with uplifted arms I declare this on oath. A beast would dance and a parrot may attain proficiency in repeating what it is taught; but the proficiency of the bird and the rhythmic movements of the beast depend on the teacher and the dancing-master. (1—4)

दो०—यों सुधारि सनमानि जन किए साधु सिरमोर ।
को कृपाल बिनु पालिहै बिरिदावलि बरजोर ॥ २९९ ॥

"Thus by reforming your servants and treating them with honour you have made them the crest-jewels of holy men. Is there anyone save the All-merciful (yourself) who will rigidly maintain his high reputation (as a kind and generous master)? (299)

चौ०—सोक सनेहँ कि बाल सुभाएँ । आयउँ लाइ रजायसु बाएँ ॥
तबहुँ कृपाल हेरि निज ओरा । सबहि भाँति भल मानेउ मोरा ॥ १ ॥
देखेउँ पाय सुमंगल मूला । जानेउँ स्वामि सहज अनुकूला ॥
बड़ें समाज बिलोकेउँ भागू । बड़ीं चूक साहिब अनुरागू ॥ २ ॥
कृपा अनुग्रहु अंगु अघाई । कीन्हि कृपानिधि सब अधिकाई ॥
राखा मोर दुलार गोसाईं । अपनें सील सुभायँ भलाईं ॥ ३ ॥
नाथ निपट मैं कीन्हि ढिठाई । स्वामि समाज सकोच बिहाई ॥
अबिनय बिनय जथारुचि बानी । छमिहि देउ अति आरति जानी ॥ ४ ॥

"Through grief, affection or mere childishness I came here in defiance of your commands; yet, true to his own disposition, my gracious lord (yourself) has taken my insolence in good part in every way. I have seen your most blessed feet and come to know that my master (yourself) is naturally propitious to me. In this august assembly I have seen my good fortune in that I continue to enjoy my master's affection in spite of great remissness on my part. My all-gracious lord (yourself) has been extremely kind and compassionate to me in every way: all this is more than I have ever deserved. By virtue of his own amiability, noble disposition and goodness my lord (yourself) has ever been indulgent to me. Giving up all consideration for the feelings of my master and this assembly I have presumed too much by speaking politely or impolitely even as it pleased me; but perceiving my great distress I am sure my lord will pardon me. (1—4)

दो०—सुहृद सुजान सुसाहिबहि बहुत कहब बड़ि खोरि ।
आयसु देइअ देव अब सबइ सुधारी मोरि ॥ ३०० ॥

"It is a great mistake to say too much to a loving, intelligent and good master. Therefore, be pleased, my lord, to give your command; for you have accomplished all my objects. (300)

चौ०—प्रभु पद पदुम पराग दोहाई । सत्य सुकृत सुख सीवँ सुहाई ॥
सो करि कहउँ हिए अपने की । रुचि जागत सोवत सपने की ॥ १ ॥
सहज सनेहँ स्वामि सेवकाई । स्वारथ छल फल चारि बिहाई ॥
अग्या सम न सुसाहिब सेवा । सो प्रसादु जन पावै देवा ॥ २ ॥
अस कहि प्रेम बिबस भए भारी । पुलक सरीर बिलोचन बारी ॥
प्रभु पद कमल गहे अकुलाई । समउ सनेहु न सो कहि जाई ॥ ३ ॥
कृपासिंधु सनमानि सुबानी । बैठाए समीप गहि पानी ॥
भरत बिनय सुनि देखि सुभाऊ । सिथिल सनेहँ सभा रघुराऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"Swearing by the dust of my lord's lotus feet, which is the glorious consummation of truth, virtue and happiness, I proclaim the desire which I have cherished in my heart at all time, whether waking, dreaming or fast asleep. It is to serve my master with guileless and spontaneous affection forgetting my own interests and neglecting the four ends of human existence. And the greatest service to a noble master is to obey his orders. Let your servant, my lord, obtain this favour (in the form of an order)." So saying he was utterly overwhelmed with emotion; a thrill ran through his body and tears rushed to his eyes. In great distress he clasped the Lord's lotus feet; the excitement of the moment and the intensity of affection cannot be described in words. The Ocean of Compassion honoured him with kind words and taking him by the hand seated him by His side. The whole assembly including the Lord of Raghus Himself was overpowered by love after hearing Bharata's entreaty and seeing his disposition. (1—4)

छं०—रघुराउ सिथिल सनेहँ साधु समाज मुनि मिथिला धनी ।
मन महुँ सराहत भरत भायप भगति की महिमा घनी ॥
भरतहि प्रसंसत बिबुध बरषत सुमन मानस मलिन से ।
तुलसी बिकल सब लोग सुनि सकुचे निसागम नलिन से ॥

The Lord of Raghus, the congregation of holy men, the sage Vasiṣṭha and the lord of Mithilā, all were faint with love and admired in their heart the surpassing glory of Bharata's brotherly affection and devotion. The gods acclaimed Bharata and rained down flowers on him as though with a doleful heart. Hearing of this, says Tulasīdāsa, everyone felt distressed and uncomfortable even as lotuses get withered at the approach of night.

सो०—देखि दुखारी दीन दुहु समाज नर नारि सब ।
मघवा महा मलीन मुए मारि मंगल चहत ॥ २०१ ॥

Seeing every man and woman both of Ayodhyā and Mithilā afflicted and downcast, Indra, who was most malicious at heart, sought his own happiness by killing those that were already dead. (301)

चौ०—कपट कुचालि सीवँ सुरराजू । पर अकाज प्रिय आपन काजू ॥
काक समान पाकरिपु रीती । छली मलीन कतहुँ न प्रतीती ॥ १ ॥
प्रथम कुमत करि कपटु सँकेला । सो उचाटु सब कें सिर मेला ॥
सुरमायाँ सब लोग बिमोहे । राम प्रेम अतिसय न बिछोहे ॥ २ ॥
भय उचाट बस मन थिर नाहीं । छन बन रुचि छन सदन सोहाहीं ॥
दुबिध मनोगति प्रजा दुखारी । सरित सिंधु संगम जनु बारी ॥ ३ ॥
दुचित कतहुँ परितोषु न लहहीं । एक एक सन मरमु न कहहीं ॥
लखि हियँ हँसि कह कृपानिधानू । सरिस स्वान मघवान जुबानू ॥ ४ ॥

Though king of the gods, Indra is the worst specimen of deceitfulness and villainy; he loves others' loss and his own gain. The ways of Indra (the slayer of the demon Pāka) are like those of a crow,—crafty, malicious and trusting none. Having conceived an evil design in the first instance he wove a net of wiles and made everyone a victim of ennui by throwing the net on the head of each. He then infatuated all by exerting the deluding potency of the gods; but they could not be wholly deprived of the affection they bore for Śrī Rāma. Overcome as they all were by fear and ennui, they were all distracted. Now they conceived a liking for the woods and the very next moment they loved to be at their home. The people were afflicted by this vacillating attitude of their mind even as the water at the mouth of a river is tossed on both sides. Wavering in mind, they did not derive solace anywhere nor did they disclose their heart to one another. Observing this, the all-compassionate Lord smiled within Himself and said, "The canine race, Indra and reckless youth are alike* in nature." (1–4)

* The nominal bases *Śwan* (a dog), *Yuvan* (a young gallant) and *Maghavan* (Indra) are declined in the same way according to the Sanskrit grammar (*vide* Pāṇini's aphorism 'श्वयुवमघोनामतद्धिते'). The poet ingeniously traces this verbal affinity to a natural affinity existing between the three.

दो०—भरतु जनकु मुनिजन सचिव साधु सचेत बिहाइ ।
लागि देवमाया सबहि जथाजोगु जनु पाइ ॥ ३०२ ॥

Barring Bharata, King Janaka, the host of sages, the ministers and enlightened saints the deluding potency of the gods prevailed on all according to the susceptibility of each. (302)

चौ०—कृपासिंधु लखि लोग दुखारे । निज सनेहँ सुरपति छल भारे ॥
सभा राउ गुर महिसुर मंत्री । भरत भगति सब कै मति जंत्री ॥ १ ॥
रामहि चितवत चित्र लिखे से । सकुचत बोलत बचन सिखे से ॥
भरत प्रीति नति बिनय बड़ाई । सुनत सुखद बरनत कठिनाई ॥ २ ॥
जासु बिलोकि भगति लवलेसू । प्रेम मगन मुनिगन मिथिलेसू ॥
महिमा तासु कहै किमि तुलसी । भगति सुभायँ सुमति हियँ हुलसी ॥ ३ ॥
आपु छोटि महिमा बड़ि जानी । कबिकुल कानि मानि सकुचानी ॥
कहि न सकति गुन रुचि अधिकाई । मति गति बाल बचन की नाई ॥ ४ ॥

The Ocean of Compassion, Śrī Rāma, saw the people agitated, on the one hand, by the affection they bore towards Himself and, on the other, by the mighty trick played by Indra, the lord of celestials. The assembly, King Janaka, the preceptor (the sage Vasistha), the other Brahmans and the ministers, all had their wits hampered by Bharata's devotion (to Srī Rāma). Like figures drawn in a painting they regarded Srī Rāma and uttered with diffidence words which they had been taught to repeat as it were. Bharata's affection, courtesy, modesty and nobility were delightful to hear but difficult to describe. Seeing a minute particle of his devotion the host of sages and the King of Mithilā were absorbed in love; how then, can I, Tulasīdasa, speak of his glory ? It is his devotion and noble sentiments that have inspired sublime thoughts in the poet's mind. When it came to know of its own poverty and the magnitude of Bharata's glory, it shrank into itself out of respect for the barriers imposed by the race of bards. Though greatly enamoured of his virtues it is unable to describe them; the poet's wit finds itself as helpless as an infant's speech. (1—4)

दो०—भरत बिमल जसु बिमल बिधु सुमति चकोरकुमारि ।
उदित बिमल जन हृदय नभ एकटक रही निहारि ॥ ३०३ ॥

Bharata's untarnished glory is like the moon without its spot while the poet's brilliant wit is like the young of a Chakora bird that remains gazing with unwinking eyes when it sees the moon rising in the heavens of a guileless devotee's heart. (303)

चौ०—भरत सुभाउ न सुगम निगमहूँ । लघु मति चापलता कबि छमहूँ ॥
कहत सुनत सति भाउ भरत को । सीय राम पद होइ न रत को ॥ १ ॥
सुमिरत भरतहि प्रेमु राम को । जेहि न सुलभु तेहि सरिस बाम को ॥
देखि दयाल दसा सबही की । राम सुजान जानि जन जी की ॥ २ ॥

धरम धुरीन धीर नय नागर । सत्य सनेह सील सुख सागर ॥
देसु कालु लखि समउ समाजू । नीति प्रीति पालक रघुराजू ॥ ३ ॥
बोले बचन बानि सरबसु से । हित परिनाम सुनत ससि रसु से ॥
तात भरत तुम्ह धरम धुरीना । लोक बेद बिद प्रेम प्रबीना ॥ ४ ॥

Bharata's noble sentiment cannot be easily grasped even by the Vedas; pardon, therefore, O poets ! the frivolity of my poor wits. By discussing Bharata's genuine love who will not get devoted to the feet of Sītā and Śrī Rāma ? Is there anyone so vile as the man who is not easily inspired with love for Śrī Rāma by the very thought of Bharata ? Seeing the plight of all and knowing what was in the mind of His devotee (Bharata) and after fully considering the place, time, occasion and gathering, the all-merciful and all-knowing Śrī Rāma, the Lord of Raghus, who was a champion of virtue, self-possessed and prudent, and an ocean of truth, love, amiability and joy, nay, who respected the laws of propriety and was faithful in His love, spoke words which formed the very essence as it were of eloquence and which were salutary in consequence and sweet as nectar to hear: "Dear Bharata, you are an upholder of righteousness, well-versed in secular lore as well as in the Vedas and adept in love.

(1–4)

दो०—करम बचन मानस बिमल तुम्ह समान तुम्ह तात ।
गुर समाज लघु बंधु गुन कुसमयँ किमि कहि जात ॥ ३०४ ॥

"Pure in thought, word and deed, you are your only compeer, dear brother. In this assembly of elders and in such adverse circumstances how can I recount the virtues of a younger brother ?

(304)

चौ०—जानहु तात तरनि कुल रीती । सत्यसंध पितु कीरति प्रीती ॥
समउ समाजु लाज गुरजन की । उदासीन हित अनहित मन की ॥ १ ॥
तुम्हहि बिदित सबही कर करमू । आपन मोर परम हित धरमू ॥
मोहि सब भाँति भरोस तुम्हारा । तदपि कहउँ अवसर अनुसारा ॥ २ ॥
तात तात बिनु बात हमारी । केवल गुरकुल कृपाँ सँभारी ॥
नतरु प्रजा परिजन परिवारू । हमहि सहित सबु होत खुआरू ॥ ३ ॥
जौं बिनु अवसर अथवँ दिनेसू । जग केहि कहहु न होइ कलेसू ॥
तस उतपातु तात बिधि कीन्हा । मुनि मिथिलेस राखि सबु लीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

"You are conversant, dear brother, with the traditions of the solar race, and know how truthful and how fond of fame our father was. You are also alive to the gravity of the occasion, the circumstances in which we are placed and the consideration we should have for the feelings of our elders and further know the mind of your friends, foes and neutrals. You are also aware of everyone's duty as well as of what is best for you and me and of what we should do. I have entire confidence in you; yet I say something appropriate to the occasion. In the absence of our father, dear brother, all our interests have been conserved by the goodwill of our preceptor's family; otherwise our subjects, our kinsmen, our own people and ourselves, all would have

been undone. If the sun (the lord of the day) sets before time, tell me, who in this world will not be subjected to hardship? A similar calamity was visited upon us by Providence, but the sage Vasiṣṭha and the lord of Mithilā saved everything. (1—4)

दो०—राज काज सब लाज पति धरम धरनि धन धाम।
गुर प्रभाउ पालिहि सबहि भल होइहि परिनाम ॥ ३०५ ॥

"Not only the affairs of the state, but our honour and fair name, our virtue, land, riches and houses, everything will be protected by our Guru's glory and all will be well in the end. (305)

चौ०—सहित समाज तुम्हार हमारा। घर बन गुर प्रसाद रखवारा ॥
मातु पिता गुर स्वामि निदेसू। सकल धरम धरनीधर सेसू ॥ १ ॥
सो तुम्ह करहु करावहु मोहू। तात तरनिकुल पालक होहू ॥
साधक एक सकल सिधि देनी। कीरति सुगति भूतिमय बेनी ॥ २ ॥
सो बिचारि सहि संकटु भारी। करहु प्रजा परिवारु सुखारी ॥
बाँटी बिपति सबहिं मोहि भाई। तुम्हहि अवधि भरि बड़ि कठिनाई ॥ ३ ॥
जानि तुम्हहि मृदु कहउँ कठोरा। कुसमयँ तात न अनुचित मोरा ॥
होहिं कुठायँ सुबंधु सहाए। ओड़िअहिं हाथ असनिहु के घाए ॥ ४ ॥

"At home as well as in the woods our preceptor's goodwill alone will protect both you and me as well as those about us. Obedience to one's father and mother, preceptor and master is the prop of all virtues, even as Śeṣa (the lord of serpents) supports the globe on his head. Therefore, obey their commands yourself and help me do the same, and be the saviour of the solar race, dear brother. This is the one discipline that bestows all success upon the striver and like the triple stream of the Gangā, Yamunā and Saraswatī at Prayāga combines fame, salvation and prosperity. Considering this and even though enduring great hardship make your subjects and your own people happy. My woe has been shared by all; but your lot will be the hardest for the whole term of my exile. I know you to be tender-hearted, yet am speaking repugnant words to you; but the times are so out of joint that this will not be unjustifiable on my part. In hard times good brothers alone stand one in good stead; it is by one's arms alone that one parries the strokes even of a thunderbolt. (1—4)

दो०—सेवक कर पद नयन से मुख सो साहिबु होइ।
तुलसी प्रीति कि रीति सुनि सुकबि सराहहिं सोइ ॥ ३०६ ॥

"Servants should be like hands, feet and eyes; while a master should be like a mouth*. Hearing of this (ideal) way of love (between a master and his servants) good poets offer their tribute to the same." (306)

* While hands, feet and eyes minister to the mouth by supplying food to it, the mouth in its turn, though appearing to accept and appropriate the whole of it to itself, equitably distributes the benefit of it to all the organs by nourishing and revitalizing them in due proportion, so should a master while taking service from his servants and giving none to them in return should nourish them and keep them whole.

चौ०—सभा सकल सुनि रघुबर बानी । प्रेम पयोधि अमिअँ जनु सानी ॥
सिथिल समाज सनेह समाधी । देखि दसा चुप सारद साधी ॥ १ ॥
भरतहि भयउ परम संतोषू । सनमुख स्वामि बिमुख दुख दोषू ॥
मुख प्रसन्न मन मिटा बिषादू । भा जनु गूँगेहि गिरा प्रसादू ॥ २ ॥
कीन्ह सप्रेम प्रनामु बहोरी । बोले पानि पंकरुह जोरी ॥
नाथ भयउ सुखु साथ गए को । लहेउँ लाहु जग जनमु भए को ॥ ३ ॥
अब कृपाल जस आयसु होई । करौं सीस धरि सादर सोई ॥
सो अवलंब देव मोहि देई । अवधि पारु पावौं जेहि सेई ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing the speech of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus), which was imbued as it were with the nectar churned out of the ocean of love, the whole assembly was lost in a trance of affection. Even goddess Śāradā was struck dumb at their sight. Bharata derived supreme consolation; now that his master was propitious to him, woe and evil turned away from him. He now wore a cheerful countenance and the heaviness of his heart was gone; it seemed as if a dumb man had been favoured by the goddess of speech. He then made loving obeisance and spoke with his lotus palms joined together: "My lord, I have derived the joy of having accompanied you and have also obtained the reward of being born into this world. Now, my gracious lord, what ever be Your command, I will bow to it and carry it out with reverence. Pray vouchsafe to me, good sir, some tangible support by serving which I may be enabled to reach the end of the term of your exile. (1–4)

दो०—देव देव अभिषेक हित गुर अनुसासनु पाइ ।
आनेउँ सब तीरथ सलिलु तेहि कहँ काह रजाइ ॥ ३०७ ॥

"In obedience to our preceptor's command, my lord, I have brought for your coronation water from all holy places; what are your orders respecting the same ? (307)

चौ०—एकु मनोरथु बड़ मन माहीं । सभयँ सकोच जात कहि नाहीं ॥
कहहु तात प्रभु आयसु पाई । बोले बानि सनेह सुहाई ॥ १ ॥
चित्रकूट सुचि थल तीरथ बन । खग मृग सर सरि निर्झर गिरिगन ॥
प्रभु पद अंकित अवनि बिसेषी । आयसु होइ त आवौं देखी ॥ २ ॥
अवसि अत्रि आयसु सिर धरहू । तात बिगतभय कानन चरहू ॥
मुनि प्रसाद बनु मंगल दाता । पावन परम सुहावन भ्राता ॥ ३ ॥
रिषिनायकु जहँ आयसु देहीं । राखेहु तीरथ जलु थल तेहीं ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन भरत सुखु पावा । मुनि पद कमल मुदित सिरु नावा ॥ ४ ॥

"I have one great longing at heart; but due to fear and diffidence I am unable to mention it." "Tell me, dear brother, what it is" Thus receiving the Lord's permission Bharata replied in words sweetened by love: "With your permission I would go and see Chitrakuṭa with its sacred spots, holy places and woods, birds and beasts, lakes and streams, springs and hills

and particularly the land adorned with my lord's footprints." "Certainly, do as the sage Atri bids you do, dear brother, and wander without fear through the woods. It is the sage's blessing, brother, which makes the forest so auspicious, holy and exquisitely beautiful. Deposit the water from holy places wherever the chief of sages, Atri, directs you." On hearing the reply of his lord Bharata rejoiced and cheerfully went and bowed his head at the lotus feet of the sage (Atri). (1—4)

दो०—भरत राम संवादु सुनि सकल सुमंगल मूल ।
सुर स्वारथी सराहि कुल बरषत सुरतरु फूल ॥ ३०८ ॥

The selfish gods, when they heard this conversation between Bharata and Śrī Rāma, which was a fountain of all fair blessings, applauded the race of Raghu and rained down flowers from the tree of paradise. (308)

चौ०—धन्य भरत जय राम गोसाईं । कहत देव हरषत बरिआईं ॥
मुनि मिथिलेस सभाँ सब काहू । भरत बचन सुनि भयउ उछाहू ॥ १ ॥
भरत राम गुन ग्राम सनेहू । पुलकि प्रसंसत राउ बिदेहू ॥
सेवक स्वामि सुभाउ सुहावन । नेमु पेमु अति पावन पावन ॥ २ ॥
मति अनुसार सराहन लागे । सचिव सभासद सब अनुरागे ॥
सुनि सुनि राम भरत संबादू । दुहु समाज हियँ हरषु बिषादू ॥ ३ ॥
राम मातु दुखु सुखु सम जानी । कहि गुन राम प्रबोधीं रानी ॥
एक कहहिं रघुबीर बड़ाई । एक सराहत भरत भलाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Praised be Bharata and glory to our lord, Śrī Rāma!" exclaimed the gods with great exultation. The sage Vasiṣṭha, the lord of Mithilā and everyone else in the assembly rejoiced to hear Bharata's words. Thrilling all over with joy King Videha extolled the host of virtues and affection both of Bharata and Śrī Rāma. The ministers and all others present in the assembly were overwhelmed with love even as they began to praise, each according to the best of his ability, the charming disposition both of the master and the servant, their fidelity and love, the purest of the pure. In both camps a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow throbbed in the heart of all as they continued to hear the conversation between Śrī Rāma and Bharata. Realizing joy and sorrow alike, Śrī Rāma's mother comforted the other queen-mothers (her co-wives) by recounting Śrī Rāma's virtues. Some would glorify the Hero of Raghu's race, while others praised Bharata's goodness. (1—4)

दो०—अत्रि कहेउ तब भरत सन सैल समीप सुकूप ।
राखिअ तीरथ तोय तहँ पावन अमिअ अनूप ॥ ३०९ ॥

Then said Atri to Bharata, "There is a beautiful well adjoining the hill; the water from the sacred places, which is so holy, sweet as nectar and incomparable, may be deposited in it." (309)

चौ०—भरत अत्रि अनुसासन पाई। जल भाजन सब दिए चलाई ॥
सानुज आपु अत्रि मुनि साधू। सहित गए जहँ कूप अगाधू ॥ १ ॥
पावन पाथ पुन्यथल राखा। प्रमुदित प्रेम अत्रि अस भाषा ॥
तात अनादि सिद्ध थल एहू। लोपेउ काल बिदित नहिं केहू ॥ २ ॥
तब सेवकन्ह सरस थलु देखा। कीन्ह सुजल हित कूप बिसेषा ॥
बिधि बस भयउ बिस्व उपकारू। सुगम अगम अति धरम बिचारू ॥ ३ ॥
भरतकूप अब कहिहहिं लोगा। अति पावन तीरथ जल जोगा ॥
प्रेम सनेम निमज्जत प्रानी। होइहहिं बिमल करम मन बानी ॥ ४ ॥

On receiving Atri's command, Bharata despatched (ahead of himself) all the vessels containing the holy water and himself repaired with his younger brother (Śatrughna) and the sage Atri and other hermits and holy men to the well, which was fathomless in its depth, and deposited the holy water in that sacred place. Transported with joy the sage Atri lovingly spoke thus: "This place has brought success to the striver from time without beginning; having been obscured by time it was known to none. My servants marked this soil as rich in subterranean springs of water and dug a big well in it with a view to securing good water. By a decree of Providence the whole world has been benefited (by dropping in this well the water from holy places) and the idea of religious merit (accruing from a bath in this well), which was most incomprehensible (to the ordinary intellect) has become easily intelligible to all. People will now call it by the name of Bharatakūpa (a well sacred to the memory of Bharata). Its sanctity has been enhanced because water from all holy places has been mixed into it. People who take a plunge into it with devotion and with due ceremony will become pure in thought, word and deed. (1—4)

दो०—कहत कूप महिमा सकल गए जहाँ रघुराउ।
अत्रि सुनायउ रघुबरहि तीरथ पुन्य प्रभाउ ॥ ३१० ॥

Telling one another the glory of the well all returned to the hermitage of Śrī Rāma, the Lord of Raghus; and the sage Atri pointed out to the Chief of Raghus the purifying power of that holy place. (310)

चौ०—कहत धरम इतिहास सप्रीती। भयउ भोरु निसि सो सुख बीती ॥
नित्य निबाहि भरत दोउ भाई। राम अत्रि गुर आयसु पाई ॥ १ ॥
सहित समाज साज सब सादें। चले राम बन अटन पयादें ॥
कोमल चरन चलत बिनु पनहीं। भइ मृदु भूमि सकुचि मन मनहीं ॥ २ ॥
कुस कंटक काँकरीं कुराईं। कटुक कठोर कुबस्तु दुराईं ॥
महि मंजुल मृदु मारग कीन्हे। बहत समीर त्रिबिध सुख लीन्हे ॥ ३ ॥
सुमन बरषि सुर घन करि छाहीं। बिटप फूलि फलि तृन मृदुताहीं ॥
मृग बिलोकि खग बोलि सुबानी। सेवहिं सकल राम प्रिय जानी ॥ ४ ॥

The night was pleasantly spent in narrating sacred legends with love till it was dawn. Having finished their daily morning routine and receiving the permission of Śrī Rāma, Atri and the preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha), the

two brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna, proceeded on foot to roam about in the forest associated with the name of Śrī Rāma, accompanied by their followers, all in simple attire. Feeling inwardly uncomfortable at the thought that the two brothers walked without shoes on their tender feet, Earth smoothened her surface and hid into her body all disagreeable, hard and unsightly things such as the spiky blades of Kuśa grass, thorns, stones and crevices. In this way Earth made the paths delightful and smooth, while a refreshing breeze breathed cool, soft and fragrant. The gods rained down flowers; the clouds afforded shade; the trees blossomed and bore fruit: the grass made the earth's surface soft; the deer cast their charming glances; while the birds whispered their sweet notes: in this way all offered their services to the two princes, whom they knew to be Śrī Rāma's beloved brothers. (1—4)

दो०—सुलभ सिद्धि सब प्राकृतहु राम कहत जमुहात ।
राम प्रानप्रिय भरत कहुँ यह न होइ बड़ि बात ॥ ३११ ॥

When all supernatural powers become easily attainable to an ordinary individual who utters the name of 'Rāma' even while yawning, this is no great honour to Bharata, who was dear to Rāma as His own life. (311)

चौ०—एहि बिधि भरतु फिरत बन माहीं । नेमु प्रेमु लखि मुनि सकुचाहीं ॥
पुन्य जलाश्रय भूमि बिभागा । खग मृग तरु तृन गिरि बन बागा ॥ १ ॥
चारु बिचित्र पबित्र बिसेषी । बूझत भरतु दिब्य सब देखी ॥
सुनि मन मुदित कहत रिषिराऊ । हेतु नाम गुन पुन्य प्रभाऊ ॥ २ ॥
कतहुँ निमज्जन कतहुँ प्रनामा । कतहुँ बिलोकत मन अभिरामा ॥
कतहुँ बैठि मुनि आयसु पाई । सुमिरत सीय सहित दोउ भाई ॥ ३ ॥
देखि सुभाउ सनेहु सुसेवा । देहिं असीस मुदित बनदेवा ॥
फिरहिं गएँ दिनु पहर अढ़ाई । प्रभु पद कमल बिलोकहिं आई ॥ ४ ॥

In this way Bharata roamed about in the forest; even hermits felt abashed to see his devotion and austerity. The sacred ponds and tracts of land, the birds and beasts, the trees and grasses, the hills, woods and orchards were charming, wonderful and pre-eminently holy. Seeing them all so divine, Bharata asked questions about them; and in reply to them the great sage Atri told him with a glad heart the origin, name, attributes and purifying virtues of each. Taking a dip at one place they made obeisance at another; here they beheld sights that were ravishing to the soul, while there they sat down with the permission of the sage and thought of Sītā and the two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa). Seeing Bharata's good disposition, affection and loyal services the sylvan gods gladly gave him their blessing. The third watch of the day would be half spent when the two brothers returned to their camp and gazed upon the lotus feet of their lord. (1—4)

दो०—देखे थल तीरथ सकल भरत पाँच दिन माझ ।
कहत सुनत हरि हर सुजसु गयउ दिवसु भइ साँझ ॥ ३१२ ॥

Bharata visited all the sacred spots in five days. The (last) day was spent in discussing the shining glory of Hari (Bhagavān Viṣṇu) and Hara (Lord Śiva) till it was dusk. (312)

चौ०—भोर न्हाइ सबु जुरा समाजू । भरत भूमिसुर तेरहुति राजू ॥
भल दिन आजु जानि मन माहीं । रामु कृपाल कहत सकुचाहीं ॥ १ ॥
गुर नृप भरत सभा अवलोकी । सकुचि राम फिरि अवनि बिलोकी ॥
सील सराहि सभा सब सोची । कहुँ न राम सम स्वामि सँकोची ॥ २ ॥
भरत सुजान राम रुख देखी । उठि सप्रेम धरि धीर बिसेषी ॥
करि दंडवत कहत कर जोरी । राखीं नाथ सकल रुचि मोरी ॥ ३ ॥
मोहि लगि सहेउ सबहिं संतापू । बहुत भाँति दुखु पावा आपू ॥
अब गोसाइँ मोहि देउ रजाई । सेवौं अवध अवधि भरि जाई ॥ ४ ॥

On the morrow, after bathing, the whole assembly met again—Bharata, the Brahmans and the King of Tirhut (Mithilā). Though knowing at heart that the day was auspicious (for undertaking a return journey to Ayodhyā) the tender-hearted Śrī Rāma hesitated to say so. Śrī Rāma looked at His preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha), King Janaka and the assembly; but the very next moment He felt nervous and turned His eyes to the ground. Praising His regard for others' feelings the whole assembly thought that nowhere could one find a master so considerate as Śrī Rāma. Bharata, who was clever enough to perceive Śrī Rāma's wish, lovingly rose and imposing great restraint upon himself fell prostrate on the ground. Then, joining his palms, he lovingly said, "My lord, you have granted me all my desires. For my sake everybody has suffered a good deal of trouble and you too have been put to much inconvenience. Now, my lord, give me your permission to leave, so that I may go back to Ayodhyā and remain there till your return. (1—4)

दो०—जेहिं उपाय पुनि पाय जनु देखै दीनदयाल ।
सो सिख देइअ अवधि लगि कोसलपाल कृपाल ॥ ३१३ ॥

"Admonish me, O gracious Lord of Kosala, and tell me some means by practising which for the remaining period of your exile your servant (myself) may be enabled to behold the feet of his merciful master again. (313)

चौ०—पुरजन परिजन प्रजा गोसाईं । सब सुचि सरस सनेहँ सगाईं ॥
राउर बदि भल भव दुख दाहू । प्रभु बिनु बादि परम पद लाहू ॥ १ ॥
स्वामि सुजानु जानि सब ही की । रुचि लालसा रहनि जन जी की ॥
प्रनतपालु पालिहि सब काहू । देउ दुहू दिसि ओर निबाहू ॥ २ ॥
अस मोहि सब बिधि भूरि भरोसो । किएँ बिचारु न सोचु खरो सो ॥
आरति मोर नाथ कर छोहू । दुहुँ मिलि कीन्ह ढीठु हठि मोहू ॥ ३ ॥
यह बड़ दोषु दूरि करि स्वामी । तजि सकोच सिखइअ अनुगामी ॥
भरत बिनय सुनि सबहिं प्रसंसी । खीर नीर बिबरन गति हंसी ॥ ४ ॥

"Your citizens, your kinsmen and your other subjects too, my lord, are all hallowed and steeped in joy because of the love they bear for you and the relationship they have with you. It is better to be tormented by the agonies of birth and death for your sake; while without you, my lord, it is no use attaining the supreme state (of blessedness). Knowing the hearts of all and even so the liking and longings of your servant's heart as well as his way of life, my all-wise lord, who is a protector of the suppliant, will protect all, and will take care of them, both in this world and in the next, till the last. I am fully confident of this in every way; and when I ponder this, I am not in the least disturbed about it. My own distress and my lord's kindness have both combined to make me impudent. Correcting this great fault of mine, my master, instruct this servant of yours without reserve." Everyone who heard Bharata's prayer applauded it and said, "This supplication of Bharata is like a cygnet, that sifts milk from water." (1—4)

दो०—दीनबंधु सुनि बंधु के बचन दीन छलहीन ।
देस काल अवसर सरिस बोले रामु प्रबीन ॥ ३१४ ॥

The all-wise Śrī Rāma, the befriender of the afflicted, when He heard the meek and guileless speech of His brother (Bharata), replied in terms appropriate to the place, time and occasion:— (314)

चौ०—तात तुम्हारि मोरि परिजन की । चिंता गुरहि नृपहि घर बन की ॥
माथे पर गुर मुनि मिथिलेसू । हमहि तुम्हहि सपनेहुँ न कलेसू ॥ १ ॥
मोर तुम्हार परम पुरुषारथु । स्वारथु सुजसु धरमु परमारथु ॥
पितु आयसु पालिहिं दुहु भाईं । लोक बेद भल भूप भलाईं ॥ २ ॥
गुर पितु मातु स्वामि सिख पालें । चलेहुँ कुमग पग परहिं न खालें ॥
अस बिचारि सब सोच बिहाई । पालहु अवध अवधि भरि जाई ॥ ३ ॥
देसु कोसु परिजन परिवारू । गुर पद रजहिं लाग छरु भारू ॥
तुम्ह मुनि मातु सचिव सिख मानी । पालेहु पुहुमि प्रजा रजधानी ॥ ४ ॥

"Brother,—it is our preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha) and King Janaka who take thought for you and me as well as for our people, whether we be at home or in the forest. So long as our preceptor, the sage (Viśwāmitra) and the lord of Mithilā are our guardians, neither you nor I can even dream of trouble. For us two brothers, you as well as myself, the highest achievement of our human life, nay, our material gain, our glory, our virtue and our highest spiritual gain consist in this that both of us should obey our father's command. It is in vindicating the king's (our father's) reputation (by implementing his word) that our good lies both in the eyes of the world and in the estimation of the Vedas. Those who follow the advice of their preceptor, father, mother and master, never stumble even if they tread a wrong path. Pondering thus and putting away all anxiety go and rule over Ayodhyā till the appointed period. The responsibility for the protection of our land, treasury, kinsmen and our own people rests on the dust of our preceptor's feet. As for yourself you should protect the earth, your subjects and your capital in accordance with the advice of your preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha), mothers and the minister (Sumantra). (1—4)

दो०—मुखिआ मुखु सो चाहिऐ खान पान कहुँ एक ।
पालइ पोषइ सकल अँग तुलसी सहित बिबेक ॥ ३१५ ॥

"A chief should be like the mouth, which alone does all the eating and drinking but supports and nourishes all the other limbs with discretion, says Tulasīdāsa. (315)

चौ०—राजधरम सरबसु एतनोई । जिमि मन माहँ मनोरथ गोई ॥
बंधु प्रबोधु कीन्ह बहु भाँती । बिनु अधार मन तोषु न साँती ॥ १ ॥
भरत सील गुर सचिव समाजू । सकुच सनेह बिबस रघुराजू ॥
प्रभु करि कृपा पाँवरीं दीन्हीं । सादर भरत सीस धरि लीन्हीं ॥ २ ॥
चरनपीठ करुनानिधान के । जनु जुग जामिक प्रजा प्रान के ॥
संपुट भरत सनेह रतन के । आखर जुग जनु जीव जतन के ॥ ३ ॥
कुल कपाट कर कुसल करम के । बिमल नयन सेवा सुधरम के ॥
भरत मुदित अवलंब लहे तें । अस सुख जस सिय रामु रहे तें ॥ ४ ॥

"The essence of a king's duty is only this much, which lies hidden in the Śāstras, even as a desire is cherished in the heart (before it is expressed)." The Lord comforted His brother (Bharata) in many ways; but without some prop his mind found no consolation or rest. His regard for Bharata, on the one hand, and the presence of elders and ministers, on the other, overwhelmed the Lord of Raghus with a mixed feeling of embarrassment and affection. The Lord at last took compassion on him and gave him His wooden sandals, which Bharata reverently placed on his head. The sandals of the all-merciful Lord were like two watchmen entrusted with the duty of guarding the people's life or they might be compared to a pair of caskets to enshrine the jewel of Bharata's love or to the two syllables (constituting the word 'Rāma') intended for the (spiritual) practice of the human soul. Or they might be likened to a pair of doors to guard the race (of Raghu) or a pair of hands to assist in the performance of good deeds or again to a pair of eyes to show the noble path of service. Bharata was highly pleased to get this prop; he felt as happy as if Sītā and Śrī Rāma had agreed to stay (in Ayodhyā). (1—4)

दो०—मागेउ बिदा प्रनामु करि राम लिए उर लाइ ।
लोग उचाटे अमरपति कुटिल कुअवसरु पाइ ॥ ३१६ ॥

He made obeisance and begged leave to depart and Śrī Rāma clasped him to his bosom; while the malevolent lord of celestials, taking advantage of this adverse situation made the people weary. (316)

चौ०—सो कुचालि सब कहँ भइ नीकी । अवधि आस सम जीवनि जी की ॥
नतरु लखन सिय राम बियोगा । हहरि मरत सब लोग कुरोगा ॥ १ ॥
रामकृपाँ अवरेब सुधारी । बिबुध धारि भइ गुनद गोहारी ॥
भेंटत भुज भरि भाइ भरत सो । राम प्रेम रसु कहि न परत सो ॥ २ ॥

तन मन बचन उमग अनुरागा । धीर धुरंधर धीरजु त्यागा ॥
बारिज लोचन मोचत बारी । देखि दसा सुर सभा दुखारी ॥ ३ ॥
मुनिगन गुर धुर धीर जनक से । ग्यान अनल मन कसें कनक से ॥
जे बिरंचि निरलेप उपाए । पदुम पत्र जिमि जग जल जाए ॥ ४ ॥

That mischief, however, proved a boon to all; it helped to sustain their life like the hope of (Śrī Rāma's returning to Ayodhyā on the) expiry of His term of exile. Otherwise people would have succumbed to the fell disease of separation from Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and Rāma in great agony. By Śrī Rāma's grace the imbroglio was resolved and the gods, who were hostilely disposed (towards the people of Ayodhyā), now turned out helpful as allies. Śrī Rāma locked His brother, Bharata, in a close embrace; the ecstasy of His love cannot be described in words. His body, mind and speech overflowed with love and the firmest of the firm lost all firmness. His lotus eyes streamed with tears; even the assembly of gods was grieved to see His condition. The host of sages (assembled there), the preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha) and a champion of firmness like Janaka, the gold of whose mind had been tested in the fire of wisdom, nay, who were created by Brahmā as free from all attachment and were born in this world even as the lotus springs up from water (and yet remains ever above it),— (1—4)

दो०—तेउ बिलोकि रघुबर भरत प्रीति अनूप अपार ।
भए मगन मन तन बचन सहित बिराग बिचार ॥ ३१७ ॥

—Even they were overwhelmed in mind, body and speech and lost all reason and dispassion when they saw the incomparable and boundless affection of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus) and Bharata. (317)

चौ०—जहाँ जनक गुर गति मति भोरी । प्राकृत प्रीति कहत बड़ि खोरी ॥
बरनत रघुबर भरत बियोगू । सुनि कठोर कबि जानिहि लोगू ॥ १ ॥
सो सकोच रसु अकथ सुबानी । समउ सनेहु सुमिरि सकुचानी ॥
भेंटि भरतु रघुबर समुझाए । पुनि रिपुदवनु हरषि हियँ लाए ॥ २ ॥
सेवक सचिव भरत रुख पाई । निज निज काज लगे सब जाई ॥
सुनि दारुन दुखु दुहूँ समाजा । लगे चलन के साजन साजा ॥ ३ ॥
प्रभु पद पदुम बंदि दोउ भाई । चले सीस धरि राम रजाई ॥
मुनि तापस बनदेव निहोरी । सब सनमानि बहोरि बहोरी ॥ ४ ॥

The affection (of Śrī Rāma and Bharata) which baffled the wits of King Janaka and the preceptor (Vasiṣṭha),—it would be a great blunder to call it mundane. People would account the poet hard-hearted if they heard him describe the parting of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus) and Bharata. The rapture of that delicacy was past all telling; thinking of the love that manifested itself on the occasion even eloquence shrunk into itself. Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus) first embraced Bharata and consoled him; and then He gladly clasped Śatrughna to His bosom. Reading Bharata's mind his servants and ministers all left and set about their respective duties. The people in both

the camps were sore distressed to learn this and began to prepare for the return journey. The two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) adored the lotus feet of their lord and bowing to the orders of Śrī Rāma they set out on their journey. They supplicated the sages, ascetics and sylvan gods and honoured them again and again. (1—4)

दो०—लखनहि भेंटि प्रनामु करि सिर धरि सिय पद धूरि ।
चले सप्रेम असीस सुनि सकल सुमंगल मूरि ॥ ३१८ ॥

Bharata then embraced Lakṣmaṇa, while Śatrughna bowed to him and both placed the dust of Sītā's feet on their head; and receiving Her loving benediction, which was the root of all fair blessings, they departed. (318)

चौ०—सानुज राम नृपहि सिर नाई । कीन्हि बहुत बिधि बिनय बड़ाई ॥
देव दया बस बड़ दुखु पायउ । सहित समाज काननहिं आयउ ॥ १ ॥
पुर पगु धारिअ देइ असीसा । कीन्ह धीर धरि गवनु महीसा ॥
मुनि महिदेव साधु सनमाने । बिदा किए हरि हर सम जाने ॥ २ ॥
सासु समीप गए दोउ भाई । फिरे बंदि पग आसिष पाई ॥
कौसिक बामदेव जाबाली । पुरजन परिजन सचिव सुचाली ॥ ३ ॥
जथा जोगु करि बिनय प्रनामा । बिदा किए सब सानुज रामा ॥
नारि पुरुष लघु मध्य बड़ेरे । सब सनमानि कृपानिधि फेरे ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma with His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) bowed His head to King Janaka and supplicated and extolled him in many ways: "Moved by compassion for us, my lord, you suffered much and came all the way to this forest with your retinue. Now kindly bestow your blessings on us and return to your capital." At this the king took courage and departed. The Lord also treated with honour the sages and other Brahmans and holy men and bade good-bye to them with the same respect as is due to Hari (Bhagavān Viṣṇu) and Hara (Lord Śiva). The two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) then called on their mother-in-law and having adored her feet and received her blessings they came back. Śrī Rāma and His younger brother (Laksmana) took leave of the sages Kauśika (Viśwāmitra), Vāmadeva and Jābāli, the citizens, His own kinsmen and faithful ministers with due courtesy and obeisance. The gracious Lord sent back men and women of all ranks—high, low and middling—with due honour. (1—4)

दो०—भरत मातु पद बंदि प्रभु सुचि सनेहँ मिलि भेंटि ।
बिदा कीन्ह सजि पालकी सकुच सोच सब मेटि ॥ ३१९ ॥

With sincere affection the Lord adored the feet of Bharata's mother (Kaikeyī) and embraced her, and having removed all her embarrassment and grief saw her off in a palanquin duly equipped for the purpose. (319)

चौ०—परिजन मातु पितहि मिलि सीता । फिरी प्रानप्रिय प्रेम पुनीता ॥
करि प्रनामु भेंटीं सब सासू । प्रीति कहत कबि हियँ न हुलासू ॥ १ ॥

सुनि सिख अभिमत आसिष पाई । रही सीय दुहु प्रीति समाई ॥
रघुपति पटु पालकीं मगाईं । करि प्रबोधु सब मातु चढ़ाईं ॥ २ ॥
बार बार हिलि मिलि दुहु भाईं । सम सनेहँ जननीं पहुँचाईं ॥
साजि बाजि गज बाहन नाना । भरत भूप दल कीन्ह पयाना ॥ ३ ॥
हृदयँ रामु सिय लखन समेता । चले जाहिं सब लोग अचेता ॥
बसह बाजि गज पसु हियँ हारें । चले जाहिं परबस मन मारें ॥ ४ ॥

Sītā, who cherished unalloyed love for Her most beloved lord, returned after meeting Her kinsmen, father (King Janaka) and mother (Queen Sunayanā). Making obeisance to Her mothers-in-law She embraced them all; the poet has no enthusiasm left in his heart to describe Her affection. Listening to their advice and receiving benedictions of Her liking Sītā was lost in the love both of Her parents and mothers-in-law. The Lord of Raghus sent for the beautiful palanquins and with words of consolation He helped all His mothers mount them. The two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) embraced them again and again with equal affection and sent them off. Equipping the horses, elephants and vehicles of every description the hosts of Bharata and King Janaka set out on their journey. With their hearts full of Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, all the people went on their journey as if in a trance. Even the bullocks, horses, elephants and other animals trudged on against their will, sad at heart and depressed in spirits. (1—4)

दो०—गुर गुरतिय पद बंदि प्रभु सीता लखन समेत ।
फिरे हरष बिसमय सहित आए परन निकेत ॥ ३२० ॥

Adoring the feet of the Guru (the sage Vasistha) and the Guru's wife (Arundhatī) the Lord as well as Sītā and Laksmana returned with a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow to their hut of leaves. (320)

चौ०—बिदा कीन्ह सनमानि निषादू । चलेउ हृदयँ बड़ बिरह बिषादू ॥
कोल किरात भिल्ल बनचारी । फेरे फिरे जोहारि जोहारी ॥ १ ॥
प्रभु सिय लखन बैठि बट छाहीं । प्रिय परिजन बियोग बिलखाहीं ॥
भरत सनेह सुभाउ सुबानी । प्रिया अनुज संन कहत बखानी ॥ २ ॥
प्रीति प्रतीति बचन मन करनी । श्रीमुख राम प्रेम बस बरनी ॥
तेहि अवसर खग मृग जल मीना । चित्रकूट चर अचर मलीना ॥ ३ ॥
बिबुध बिलोकि दसा रघुबर की । बरषि सुमन कहि गति घर घर की ॥
प्रभु प्रनामु करि दीन्ह भरोसो । चले मुदित मन डर न खरो सो ॥ ४ ॥

The Niṣāda chief was courteously sent away and departed; leaving the Lord was a great wrench to him. Pressed to return, the Kols, Kirātas, Bhils and other foresters returned after bowing again and again. The lord with Sītā and Laksmana sat down in the shade of a banyan tree and grieved over their separation from their near and dear ones. He described to His beloved Spouse (Sītā) and younger brother (Laksmana) the

affection, noble disposition and polite speech of Bharata. Overpowered by love Śrī Rāma extolled with His own blessed lips Bharata's faith and affection in thought, word and deed. At that time the birds, beasts and the fish in water,—nay, all the animate and inanimate creatures of Chitrakūṭa felt disconsolate. The gods, when they saw the condition of Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus), rained down flowers and told Him what had been going on in their homes. The Lord made obeisance and reassured them and they returned, glad of heart, without the least fear in their mind. (1–4)

दो०—सानुज सीय समेत प्रभु राजत परन कुटीर ।
भगति ग्यानु बैराग्य जनु सोहत धरें सरीर ॥ ३२१ ॥

With Sītā and His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) the Lord shone forth in His hut of leaves. It seemed as if Bhakti (Devotion), Vairāgya (Dispassion) and Jñāna (Wisdom) had appeared in shining forms. (321)

चौ०—मुनि महिसुर गुर भरत भुआलू । राम बिरहँ सबु साजु बिहालू ॥
प्रभु गुन ग्राम गनत मन माहीं । सब चुपचाप चले मग जाहीं ॥ १ ॥
जमुना उतरि पार सबु भयऊ । सो बासरु बिनु भोजन गयऊ ॥
उतरि देवसरि दूसर बासू । रामसखाँ सब कीन्ह सुपासू ॥ २ ॥
सई उतरि गोमतीं नहाए । चौथें दिवस अवधपुर आए ॥
जनकु रहे पुर बासर चारी । राज काज सब साज सँभारी ॥ ३ ॥
सौंपि सचिव गुर भरतहि राजू । तेरहुति चले साजि सबु साजू ॥
नगर नारि नर गुर सिख मानी । बसे सुखेन राम रजधानी ॥ ४ ॥

The sages and other Brahmans, the Guru (the sage Vasiṣṭha), Bharata and King Janaka,—the whole host was mentally disturbed on account of their parting with Śrī Rāma. Revolving in their mind the numerous virtues of the lord all wended their way in silence. Crossing the Yamunā everyone reached the other bank; the day passed without any food. The next halt was made on the other bank of the Gaṅgā (at Śṛṅgaverapur) where Śrī Rāma's friend (Guha) made all arrangements for their comfort. Ferrying over the Saī they bathed in the Gomatī and reached Ayodhyā on the fourth day. King Janaka stayed in the capital for four days, looked after the state administration as well as all the state property and, entrusting the reins of government to, the ministers, the Guru (the sage Vasiṣṭha) and Bharata, he left for Tirhuț (his capital) after making all necessary preparations. Following the preceptor's advice the men and women of the city ensconced themselves in Śrī Rāma's capital (Ayodhyā). (1–4)

दो०—राम दरस लगि लोग सब करत नेम उपवास ।
तजि तजि भूषन भोग सुख जिअत अवधि कीं आस ॥ ३२२ ॥

All the people practised religious austerities and fasted in order to be able to see Rāma again. Discarding all personal adornments and sensuous pleasures they survived in the hope that the term of his exile would expire soon. (322)

चौ०—सचिव सुसेवक भरत प्रबोधे । निज निज काज पाइ सिख ओधे ॥
पुनि सिख दीन्हि बोलि लघु भाई । सौंपी सकल मातु सेवकाई ॥ १ ॥
भूसुर बोलि भरत कर जोरे । करि प्रनाम बय बिनय निहोरे ॥
ऊँच नीच कारजु भल पोचू । आयसु देब न करब सँकोचू ॥ २ ॥
परिजन पुरजन प्रजा बोलाए । समाधानु करि सुबस बसाए ॥
सानुज गे गुर गेहँ बहोरी । करि दंडवत कहत कर जोरी ॥ ३ ॥
आयसु होइ त रहौं सनेमा । बोले मुनि तन पुलकि सपेमा ॥
समुझब कहब करब तुम्ह जोई । धरम सारु जग होइहि सोई ॥ ४ ॥

Bharata instructed the ministers and trusty servants, who set about their respective duties as directed. Then, calling his younger brother (Śatrughna), he admonished him and entrusted him with the service of all their mothers. Summoning the Brahmans he made obeisance and, joining his palms, prayed to them with due courtesy befitting their age: "Pray charge me with any duty—high or low, good or indifferent—and hesitate not." He also sent for his kinsmen, citizens and other people and setting their mind at rest established them peacefully. Accompanied by his younger brother (Śatrughna) he then called on his preceptor and, prostrating himself before him, submitted with joined palms, "With your permission I will now live a life of penance." Thrilling over with love the sage replied, "Whatever you think, speak or do will be the essence of piety in this world." (1—4)

दो०—सुनि सिख पाइ असीस बड़ि गनक बोलि दिनु साधि ।
सिंघासन प्रभु पादुका बैठारे निरुपाधि ॥ ३२३ ॥

Hearing this advice and receiving the great blessing (from his preceptor) Bharata called astrologers and, fixing an auspicious day (and hour), happily installed on the throne of Ayodhyā the wooden sandals of the Lord. (323)

चौ०—राम मातु गुर पद सिरु नाई । प्रभु पद पीठ रजायसु पाई ॥
नंदिगावँ करि परन कुटीरा । कीन्ह निवासु धरम धुर धीरा ॥ १ ॥
जटाजूट सिर मुनिपट धारी । महि खनि कुस साँथरी सँवारी ॥
असन बसन बासन ब्रत नेमा । करत कठिन रिषिधरम सप्रेमा ॥ २ ॥
भूषन बसन भोग सुख भूरी । मन तन बचन तजे तिन तूरी ॥
अवध राजु सुर राजु सिहाई । दसरथ धनु सुनि धनदु लजाई ॥ ३ ॥
तेहिं पुर बसत भरत बिनु रागा । चंचरीक जिमि चंपक बागा ॥
रमा बिलासु राम अनुरागी । तजत बमन जिमि जन बड़भागी ॥ ४ ॥

Bowing his head at the feet of Śrī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) and his preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha) and receiving the permission of the Lord's sandals, Bharata, a staunch upholder of righteousness, erected a hut of leaves at Nandigrāma and took up his abode there. Wearing a tuft of matted locks on his head and clad in hermit's robes, he dug the earth

low and spread thereon a litter of Kusa grass. In food, dress, utensils, sacred observances and austerities he devoutly practised the rigid vow of hermits and professedly discarded, in thought, word and deed, all adornments of body, wearing apparel and the many pleasures of the sense. The sovereignty of Ayodhyā was the envy even of Indra (the lord of celestials), while the very report of the riches possessed by Daśaratha put to shame even Kubera (the god of riches); yet in that city Bharata dwelt as indifferent as a bee in a garden of Champaka* flowers. The blessed souls who are devoted to Śrī Rāma renounce like vomit the splendour of Lakṣmī (the wealth and enjoyments of the world).

(1—4)

दो०—राम पेम भाजन भरतु बड़े न एहिं करतूति ।
चातक हंस सराहिअत टेंक बिबेक बिभूति ॥ ३२४ ॥

As for Bharata, he was the beloved of Śrī Rāma and did not owe his greatness to this achievement. The Chātaka bird is praised for its constancy and the swan for its power of discrimination (sifting milk from water). (324)

चौ०—देह दिनहुँ दिन दूबरि होई । घटइ तेजु बलु मुखछबि सोई ॥
नित नव राम प्रेम पनु पीना । बढ़त धरम दलु मनु न मलीना ॥ १ ॥
जिमि जलु निघटत सरद प्रकासे । बिलसत बेतस बनज बिकासे ॥
सम दम संजम नियम उपासा । नखत भरत हिय बिमल अकासा ॥ २ ॥
ध्रुव बिस्वासु अवधि राका सी । स्वामि सुरति सुरबीथि बिकासी ॥
राम पेम बिधु अचल अदोषा । सहित समाज सोह नित चोखा ॥ ३ ॥
भरत रहनि समुझनि करतूती । भगति बिरति गुन बिमल बिभूती ॥
बरनत सकल सुकबि सकुचाहीं । सेस गनेस गिरा गमु नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

His body grew thinner day by day. His fat was reduced, yet his strength of body and the charm of his face remained the same. The flame of his love for Śrī Rāma was ever bright and strong. His partiality for virtue steadily grew and his mind was not at all sad, even as with the advent of autumn the water (of lakes and rivers etc.) decreases but the rattan plants thrive and the lotus blossoms. Control of the mind and senses, self-restraint, religious observances and fasting shone like so many stars in the cloudless sky of Bharata's heart. His faith stood as the pole-star, the prospect of Śrī Rāma's return on the expiry of His term of exile represented the full-moon night, while the thought of his lord glistened like the milky way. And his affection for Śrī Rāma was like a fixed and spotless moon that ever shone clear amidst a galaxy of stars. All great poets hesitate to portray the mode of living, the creed, the doings; the devotion, the dispassion, the stainless virtues and the splendour of Bharata; they baffle the wits of even Śeṣa (the thousand-headed lord of serpents), Gaṇeśa (the god of wisdom) and Saraswatī (the goddess of speech).

(1—4)

* Even though the Champaka flower is very sweet-scented, the bee, it is alleged, never sucks it.

दो०—नित पूजत प्रभु पाँवरी प्रीति न हृदयँ समाति ।
माग़ि मागि आयसु करत राज काज बहु भाँति ॥ ३२५ ॥

He daily worshipped the Lord's sandals with a heart overflowing with affection and constantly referred to them in the disposal of the many affairs of the state. (325)

चौ०—पुलक गात हियँ सिय रघुबीरू । जीह नामु जप लोचन नीरू ॥
लखन राम सिय कानन बसहीं । भरतु भवन बसि तप तनु कसहीं ॥ १ ॥
दोउ दिसि समुझि कहत सबु लोगू । सब बिधि भरत सराहन जोगू ॥
सुनि ब्रत नेम साधु सकुचाहीं । देखि दसा मुनिराज लजाहीं ॥ २ ॥
परम पुनीत भरत आचरनू । मधुर मंजु मुद मंगल करनू ॥
हरन कठिन कलि कलुष कलेसू । महामोह निसि दलन दिनेसू ॥ ३ ॥
पाप पुंज कुंजर मृगराजू । समन सकल संताप समाजू ॥
जन रंजन भंजन भव भारू । राम सनेह सुधाकर सारू ॥ ४ ॥

His body thrilling all over (with emotion) and heart full of Sītā and Śrī Rāma, his tongue repeated Śrī Rāma's name and tears flowed from his eyes. Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma and Sītā dwelt in the forest; while Bharata mortified his flesh through austere penance even though living at home. After considering both sides, everyone said that Bharata was praiseworthy in every way. Holy men felt abashed to hear of his religious vows and observances and the sight of his condition put the greatest of sages to shame. The most sanctifying story of Bharata's doings is delightful and charming and a fountain of joy and blessings. It drives away the terrible sins and afflictions of the Kali age; it is a veritable sun to disperse the night of the great delusion (which has thrown us into this world) and is a lion (the king of beasts) for crushing the herd of elephants in the shape of sins and allays all kinds of sufferings. It delights the devotees, relieves the burden of transmigration and is the essence of the moon of devotion to Śrī Rāma. (1—4)

छं०—सिय राम प्रेम पियूष पूरन होत जनमु न भरत को ।
मुनि मन अगम जम नियम सम दम बिषम ब्रत आचरत को ॥
दुख दाह दारिद दंभ दूषन सुजस मिस अपहरत को ।
कलिकाल तुलसी से सठन्हि हठि राम सनमुख करत को ॥

If Bharata, who brimmed over with the nectar of devotion to Sītā and Śrī Rāma, had never been born, who would have practised the difficult vow of self-abnegation and austerity and control of the mind and senses, that transcended the imagination even of sages? Who would have dispelled the woes, burning agony, poverty, hypocrisy and other evils of the world through his fair renown; and who in this Kali age would have forcibly diverted the mind of villains like Tulasīdāsa towards Śrī Rāma?

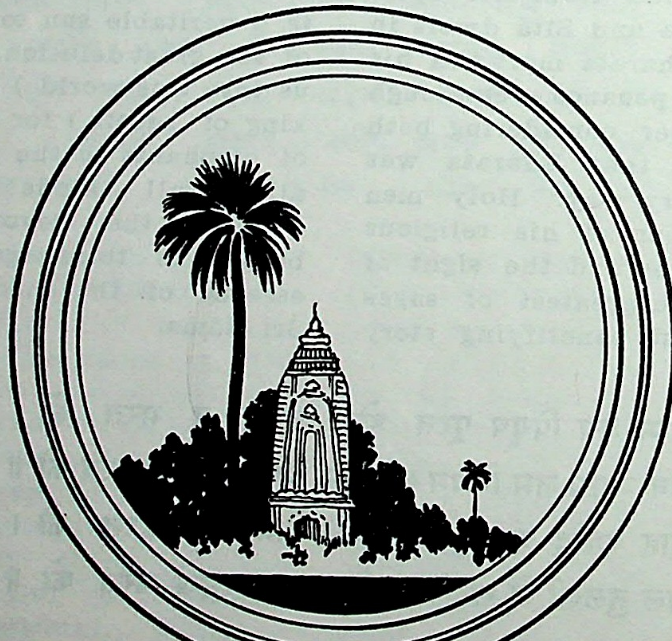
सो०—भरत चरित करि नेमु तुलसी जो सादर सुनहिं ।
सीय राम पद पेमु अवसि होइ भव रस बिरति ॥ ३२६ ॥

Whosoever reverently hear, says Tulasīdāsa, the story of Bharata with strict regularity shall assuredly acquire devotion to the feet of Sītā and Rāma and a distaste for the pleasures of life. **(326)**

[PAUSE 21 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

इति श्रीमद्रामचरितमानसे सकलकलिकलुषविध्वंसने
द्वितीयः सोपानः समाप्तः ।

Thus ends the second descent into the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, that eradicates all the impurities of the Kali age.



ॐ

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

(The Manasa Lake containing the exploits of Sri Rama)

Descent Three

(Aranyakanda)

श्लोक

मूलं धर्मतरोर्विवेकजलधेः पूर्णेन्दुमानन्ददं
वैराग्याम्बुजभास्करं ह्यघघनध्वान्तापहं तापहम् ।
मोहाम्भोधरपूगपाटनविधौ स्वःसम्भवं शङ्करं
वन्दे ब्रह्मकुलं कलङ्कशमनं श्रीरामभूपप्रियम् ॥ १ ॥

I reverence Bhagavān Śankara, the progeny of Brahmā, the very root of the tree of piety, the beloved devotee of King Śrī Rāma, the full moon that brings joy to the ocean of wisdom, the sun that opens the lotus of dispassion, the wind that disperses the clouds of ignorance, who dispels the thick darkness of sin and eradicates the threefold agony and who wipes off obloquy. (1)

सान्द्रानन्दपयोदसौभगतनुं पीताम्बरं सुन्दरं
पाणौ बाणशरासनं कटिलसत्तूणीरभारं वरम् ।
राजीवायतलोचनं धृतजटाजूटेन संशोभितं
सीतालक्ष्मणसंयुतं पथिगतं रामाभिरामं भजे ॥ २ ॥

I worship Śrī Rāma, the delighter of all, whose graceful form is an embodiment of joy and is dark as a rainy cloud, who is clad in a charming yellow bark and carries in His hands a bow and an arrow who has a beautiful, shining and well-equipped quiver fastened to His waist and has a pair of large lotus eyes, who is adorned with a tuft of matted locks on His head and who is seen journeying with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. (2)

सो॰—उमा राम गुन गूढ़ पंडित मुनि पावहिं बिरति ।
पावहिं मोह बिमूढ़ जे हरि बिमुख न धर्म रति ॥

Śrī Rāma's virtues, Umā (Pārvatī), are mysterious. The sages as well as learned men develop dispassion (when they appreciate them); while the deluded fools who are hostile to Śrī Hari and have no love for piety get bewildered to hear of them.

चौ०—पुर नर भरत प्रीति मैं गाई। मति अनुरूप अनूप सुहाई॥
अब प्रभु चरित सुनहु अति पावन। करत जे बन सुर नर मुनि भावन॥ १॥
एक बार चुनि कुसुम सुहाए। निज कर भूषन राम बनाए॥
सीतहि पहिराए प्रभु सादर। बैठे फटिक सिला पर सुंदर॥ २॥
सुरपति सुत धरि बायस बेषा। सठ चाहत रघुपति बल देखा॥
जिमि पिपीलिका सागर थाहा। महा मंदमति पावन चाहा॥ ३॥
सीता चरन चोंच हति भागा। मूढ़ मंदमति कारन कागा॥
चला रुधिर रघुनायक जाना। सींक धनुष सायक संधाना॥ ४॥

I have portrayed to the best of my ability the incomparable and charming affection (for Śrī Rāma) of the citizens (of Ayodhyā) as well as of Bharata. Now hear of the all-holy exploits of the Lord, that He wrought in the forest to the delight of gods, men and sages. On one occasion Śrī Rāma culled lovely flowers and made with His own hands a number of ornaments, with which He fondly decked Sītā and sat with Her on a beautiful rock of crystal. The foolish son of Indra (the lord of celestials) took the form of a crow and wanted to test the might of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Raghus) even as the most dull-witted ant would sound the depths of the ocean. The stupid fool, who had disguised himself as a crow with a sinister motive, bit Sītā in the foot with his beak and flew away. The Lord of Raghus came to know it only when blood ran from Her foot, and fitted a shaft of reed to His bow. (1—4)

दो०—अति कृपाल रघुनायक सदा दीन पर नेह।
ता सन आइ कीन्ह छलु मूरख अवगुन गेह॥ १॥

The Lord of Raghus is extremely compassionate and is always fond of the meek. But the mischievous fool came and played a trick even with Him. (1)

चौ०—प्रेरित मंत्र ब्रह्मसर धावा। चला भाजि बायस भय पावा॥
धरि निज रूप गयउ पितु पाहीं। राम बिमुख राखा तेहिं नाहीं॥ १॥
भा निरास उपजी मन त्रासा। जथा चक्र भय रिषि दुर्बासा॥
ब्रह्मधाम सिवपुर सब लोका। फिरा श्रमित ब्याकुल भय सोका॥ २॥
काहूँ बैठन कहा न ओही। राखि को सकइ राम कर द्रोही॥
मातु मृत्यु पितु समन समाना। सुधा होइ बिष सुनु हरिजाना॥ ३॥
मित्र करइ सत रिपु कै करनी। ता कहँ बिबुधनदी बैतरनी॥
सब जगु ताहि अनलहु ते ताता। जो रघुबीर बिमुख सुनु भ्राता॥ ४॥
नारद देखा बिकल जयंता। लागि दया कोमल चित संता॥
पठवा तुरत राम पहिं ताही। कहेसि पुकारि प्रनत हित पाही॥ ५॥
आतुर सभय गहेसि पद जाई। त्राहि त्राहि दयाल रघुराई॥
अतुलित बल अतुलित प्रभुताई। मैं मतिमंद जानि नहिं पाई॥ ६॥
निज कृत कर्म जनित फल पायउँ। अब प्रभु पाहि सरन तकि आयउँ॥
सुनि कृपाल अति आरत बानी। एकनयन करि तजा भवानी॥ ७॥

Winged with a spell, the shaft presided over by Brahmā* sped forth and the crow in terror took to flight. Indra's son now assumed his own form and approached his father. But the latter refused to give him shelter knowing him to be an enemy of Śrī Rāma. Having lost hope (of protection) he felt as alarmed at heart as the sage Durvāsā was afraid of the Lord's Discus. Weary and stricken with fear and grief, he traversed the abode of Brahmā, the realm of Lord Śiva and all other regions. But no one even asked him to sit down. Who can dare afford shelter to an enemy of Śrī Rāma ? Listen, Garuḍa (mount of Śrī Hari), a mother becomes as terrible as death and a father assumes the role of Yama (the god of death), ambrosia turns into venom and a friend becomes as hostile as a hundred enemies, the celestial river (Gaṅgā) is converted into the Vaitaraṇī,† nay the whole world becomes hotter than fire to him who is inimical to Śrī Rāma. The sage Nārada saw Jayanta (Indra's son) in distress and was moved with pity; for saints are always tender of heart. The sage sent him immediately to Śrī Rāma and he cried out, "Save me, O friend of the suppliant !" Bewildered and terrified he went and clasped His feet and said, "Mercy ! mercy ! O gracious Lord of Raghus. I could not perceive Your incomparable might and matchless glory, dull-witted as I am. I have reaped the fruit borne by my own actions and have now sought refuge in You. Protect me, my lord !" When the all-merciful Lord heard his most piteous appeal, He let him go with the loss of one eye, O Pārvatī. (1—7)

सो०—कीन्ह मोह बस द्रोह जद्यपि तेहि कर बध उचित ।
प्रभु छाड़ेउ करि छोह को कृपाल रघुबीर सम ॥ २ ॥

Even though in his infatuation Jayanta had antagonized the Lord and therefore deserved death, the latter took compassion on him and let him go. Who is there so merciful as the Hero of Raghu's line ? (2)

चौ०—रघुपति चित्रकूट बसि नाना । चरित किए श्रुति सुधा समाना ॥
बहुरि राम अस मन अनुमाना । होइहि भीर सबहिं मोहि जाना ॥ १ ॥
सकल मुनिन्ह सन बिदा कराई । सीता सहित चले द्वौ भाई ॥
अत्रि के आश्रम जब प्रभु गयऊ । सुनत महामुनि हरषित भयऊ ॥ २ ॥
पुलकित गात अत्रि उठि धाए । देखि रामु आतुर चलि आए ॥
करत दंडवत मुनि उर लाए । प्रेम बारि द्वौ जन अन्हवाए ॥ ३ ॥

* Our scriptures mention a number of missiles each presided over by a particular deity and varying in its potency according to the god by whom it is presided over and which can be invoked on any earthly weapon by means of spells. For instance we hear of an Agni-Astra (presided over by the fire-god), a Vāyavyāstra (presided over by the wind-god), Parjanyāstra (presided over by the rain-god), Pāśupatāstra (presided over by Lord Śiva) and Nārāyaṇāstra (presided over by Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa) and so on. The Agni-Astra, when discharged, rains volleys of fire; the Vāyavyastra lets loose strong winds; the Parjanyāstra releases clouds with showers and so on. It is unfortunate that the knowledge of this science, which was evidenced till the end of Dwāpara, has become extinct now.

† The name of a river in hell, which the dead have to cross before entering the infernal regions. It is represented as a filthy stream full of blood, hair and bones and every other kind of impurity. It can be crossed only with the help of a cow that may have been gifted by the deceased during his life-time.

देखि राम छबि नयन जुड़ाने । सादर निज आश्रम तब आने ॥
करि पूजा कहि बचन सुहाए । दिए मूल फल प्रभु मन भाए ॥ ४ ॥

Staying at Chitrakūṭa the Lord of Raghus performed exploits of many kinds, which are sweet to the ear as nectar. Śrī Rāma then thought to Himself, "People will throng here now that everyone has come to know me." Taking leave of all the hermits, therefore, the two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) left the place with Sītā When the Lord repaired to Atri's hermitage, the great sage was rejoiced at the news. Thrilling all over (with joy) Atri sprang up and ran to meet Him; and seeing him come Śrī Rāma too advanced hurriedly towards him. Even as the two brothers prostrated themselves the sage lifted them, and clasping them to his bosom bathed them with tears of love. His eyes were gladdened by the sight of Śrī Rāma's beauty and then he reverently escorted them to his hermitage. Paying his homage to the Lord he spoke kind words to Him and offered Him roots and fruits, which He relished much. (1—4)

सो०—प्रभु आसन आसीन भरि लोचन सोभा निरखि ।
मुनिबर परम प्रबीन जोरि पानि अस्तुति करत ॥ ३ ॥

As the Lord took His seat Atri (the chief of sages), supremely wise as he was, feasted his eyes on His loveliness, and joining his palms proceeded to extol Him:— (3)

छं०—नमामि भक्त वत्सलं । कृपालु शील कोमलं ॥
भजामि ते पदांबुजं । अकामिनां स्वधामदं ॥ १ ॥
निकाम श्याम सुंदरं । भवाम्बुनाथ मंदरं ॥
प्रफुल्ल कंज लोचनं । मदादि दोष मोचनं ॥ २ ॥
प्रलंब बाहु विक्रमं । प्रभोऽप्रमेय वैभवं ॥
निषंग चाप सायकं । धरं त्रिलोक नायकं ॥ ३ ॥
दिनेश वंश मंडनं । महेश चाप खंडनं ॥
मुनींद्र संत रंजनं । सुरारि वृंद भंजनं ॥ ४ ॥
मनोज वैरि वंदितं । अजादि देव सेवितं ॥
विशुद्ध बोध विग्रहं । समस्त दूषणापहं ॥ ५ ॥
नमामि इंदिरा पतिं । सुखाकरं सतां गतिं ॥
भजे सशक्ति सानुजं । शची पति प्रियानुजं ॥ ६ ॥
त्वदंघ्रि मूल ये नराः । भजंति हीन मत्सराः ॥
पतंति नो भवार्णवे । वितर्क वीचि संकुले ॥ ७ ॥
विविक्त वासिनः सदा । भजंति मुक्तये मुदा ॥

निरस्य इंद्रियादिकं । प्रयांति ते गतिं स्वकं ॥ ८ ॥
तमेकमद्भुतं प्रभुं । निरीहमीश्वरं विभुं ॥
जगद्गुरुं च शाश्वतं । तुरीयमेव केवलं ॥ ९ ॥
भजामि भाव वल्लभं । कुयोगिनां सुदुर्लभं ॥
स्वभक्त कल्प पादपं । समं सुसेव्यमन्वहं ॥ १० ॥
अनूप रूप भूपतिं । नतोऽहमुर्विजा पतिं ॥
प्रसीद मे नमामि ते । पदाब्ज भक्ति देहि मे ॥ ११ ॥
पठंति ये स्तवं इदं । नरादरेण ते पदं ॥
व्रजंति नात्र संशयं । त्वदीय भक्ति संयुताः ॥ १२ ॥

"I reverence You, who are so fond of Your devotees, compassionate and gentle of disposition. I adore Your lotus feet, which vouchsafe to Your selfless lovers a quarter in Your own abode. You are possessed of an exquisitely beautiful swarthy form; You are Mount Mandara as it were to churn the ocean of mundane existence; You have eyes like the full-blown lotus and rid Your votaries of pride and other vices. Immense is the might of Your long arms and immeasurable Your glory. You carry on Your person a quiver, a bow and an arrow, O Lord of the three worlds ! The ornament of the solar race, You broke the bow of the great Lord Śiva. Delighting the greatest sages and saints, You crush the host of demons (the enemies of gods). You are an object of reverence to Lord Śiva, and are adored by Brahmā and other divinities. An embodiment of pure consciousness, You destroy all evils. I bow to Lakṣmī's lord, the fountain of joy and the salvation of saints. I adore You with Your Spouse (Sītā) and younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa), Yourself a beloved younger Brother* of Indra (Śachī's lord). Men who worship the sole of Your feet and are free from jealousy sink not into the ocean of metempsychosis, turbulent with the billows of wrangling. They who, living in seclusion, constantly worship You with their senses and mind etc. fully subdued for the sake of attaining liberation are able to realize their own self. I adore Him, the mysterious Lord, who is one (without a second), desireless, all-powerful and omnipresent, the teacher of the world, eternal, transcending the three Guṇas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) and absolute (self-existent). I adore Him who is fond of devotion, who is most difficult of access to sensually-minded strivers but who is a wish-yielding tree to His own devotees, nay, who is impartial and so easy to worship from day to day. I bow to Sītā's lord, King Rāma of matchless beauty. I reverence You; be gracious to me and grant me devotion to Your lotus feet. Men who recite this hymn with reverence undoubtedly attain Your abode, acquiring devotion to Your feet at the same time." (1—12)

दो०—बिनती करि मुनि नाइ सिरु कह कर जोरि बहोरि ।
चरन सरोरुह नाथ जनि कबहुँ तजै मति मोरि ॥ ४ ॥

---

* The Lord is here identified with Bhagavān Vāmana (the divine Dwarf), who was born of Aditi (Kaśyapa's wife) as a younger brother of Indra.

Having prayed thus the sage bowed his head, and joining his palms spoke again: "My mind, O Lord, may never abandon Your lotus feet." (4)

चौ०—अनुसुइया के पद गहि सीता । मिली बहोरि सुसील बिनीता ॥
रिषिपतिनी मन सुख अधिकाई । आसिष देइ निकट बैठाई ॥ १ ॥
दिब्य बसन भूषन पहिराए । जे नित नूतन अमल सुहाए ॥
कह रिषिबधू सरस मृदु बानी । नारिधर्म कछु ब्याज बखानी ॥ २ ॥
मातु पिता भ्राता हितकारी । मितप्रद सब सुनु राजकुमारी ॥
अमित दानि भर्ता बयदेही । अधम सो नारि जो सेव न तेही ॥ ३ ॥
धीरज धर्म मित्र अरु नारी । आपद काल परिखिअहिं चारी ॥
बृद्ध रोगबस जड़ धनहीना । अंध बधिर क्रोधी अति दीना ॥ ४ ॥
ऐसेहु पति कर किएँ अपमाना । नारि पाव जमपुर दुख नाना ॥
एकइ धर्म एक ब्रत नेमा । कायँ बचन मन पति पद प्रेमा ॥ ५ ॥
जग पतिब्रता चारि बिधि अहहीं । बेद पुरान संत सब कहहीं ॥
उत्तम के अस बस मन माहीं । सपनेहुँ आन पुरुष जग नाहीं ॥ ६ ॥
मध्यम परपति देखइ कैसें । भ्राता पिता पुत्र निज जैसें ॥
धर्म बिचारि समुझि कुल रहई । सो निकिष्ट त्रिय श्रुति अस कहई ॥ ७ ॥
बिनु अवसर भय तें रह जोई । जानेहु अधम नारि जग सोई ॥
पति बंचक परपति रति करई । रौरव नरक कल्प सत परई ॥ ८ ॥
छन सुख लागि जनम सत कोटी । दुख न समुझ तेहि सम को खोटी ॥
बिनु श्रम नारि परम गति लहई । पतिब्रत धर्म छाड़ि छल गहई ॥ ९ ॥
पति प्रतिकूल जनम जहँ जाई । बिधवा होइ पाइ तरुनाई ॥ १० ॥

Then Sītā, who was so good-natured and modest, met Anasūyā (Atri's wife) and clasped her feet. The sage's wife felt extremely pleased at heart; she blessed Her and seating Her by her side arrayed Her in heavenly robes and ornaments that remained ever new, clean and charming. In affectionate and mild tones the holy woman then proceeded to discourse on some wifely virtues, making Her an occasion for such discourse: "Listen, O Princess: a mother, father and brother are all kind to us; but they bestow only limited joy. A husband, however, bestows unlimited joy (in the shape of blessedness), O Videha's daughter; vile is the woman who refuses to serve him. Fortitude, piety a friend and a wife—these four are put to the test only in times of adversity. A womon who treats her husband with disrespect,—even though he is old, sick, dull-headed, indigent, blind, deaf, wrathful or most wretched,—shall suffer various torments in hell (the abode of Yama). Devotion of body, speech and mind to her lord's feet is the only duty, sacred vow and penance of a woman. There are four types of faithful wives in this world: so declare the Vedas, the Purāṇas and all the saints. A woman of the best type is convinced in her heart of hearts that she cannot even dream in this world of a man other than her lord. The middling regards another's husband as her own brother, father or son (according to his age). She who is restrained by considerations of virtue or by the thought of her race is declared by the Vedas as a

low woman. And know her to be the lowest woman in this world, who is restrained only by fear and want of opportunity. The woman who deceives her husband and loves a paramour is cast for a hundred cycles into the worst form of hell known by the name of Raurava. Who is so depraved as the woman who for the sake of a moment's pleasure reckons not the torment that shall endure for a thousand million births? The woman who sincerely takes a vow of fidelity to her husband easily attains the highest state; while she who is disloyal to her lord is widowed as soon as she attains her youth wherever she may be reborn.
(1—10)

सो०—सहज अपावनि नारि पति सेवत सुभ गति लहइ।
जसु गावत श्रुति चारि अजहुँ तुलसिका हरिहि प्रिय ॥ ५ (क) ॥
सुनु सीता तव नाम सुमिरि नारि पतिब्रत करहिं।
तोहि प्रानप्रिय राम कहिउँ कथा संसार हित ॥ ५ (ख) ॥

A woman is impure by her very birth; but she attains a happy state (hereafter) by serving her lord. (It is due to her loyalty to her husband that) Tulasī is loved by Śrī Hari even to this day and her glory is sung by all the four Vedas. Listen, Sītā: women will maintain their vow of fidelity to their husband by invoking your very name, Śrī Rāma being dear to you as your own life. It is for the good of the world that I have spoken to you on the subject."
(5 A-B)

चौ०—सुनि जानकीं परम सुखु पावा। सादर तासु चरन सिरु नावा ॥
तब मुनि सन कह कृपानिधाना। आयसु होइ जाउँ बन आना ॥ १ ॥
संतत मो पर कृपा करेहू। सेवक जानि तजेहु जनि नेहू ॥
धर्म धुरंधर प्रभु कै बानी। सुनि सप्रेम बोले मुनि ग्यानी ॥ २ ॥
जासु कृपा अज सिव सनकादी। चहत सकल परमारथ बादी ॥
ते तुम्ह राम अकाम पिआरे। दीन बंधु मृदु बचन उचारे ॥ ३ ॥
अब जानी मैं श्री चतुराई। भजी तुम्हहि सब देव बिहाई ॥
जेहि समान अतिसय नहिं कोई। ता कर सील कस न अस होई ॥ ४ ॥
केहि बिधि कहौं जाहु अब स्वामी। कहहु नाथ तुम्ह अंतरजामी ॥
अस कहि प्रभु बिलोकि मुनि धीरा। लोचन जल बह पुलक सरीरा ॥ ५ ॥

Janaka's Daughter (Sītā) was overjoyed to hear this discourse and reverently bowed Her head at the feet of Anasūyā. The All-merciful then said to the sage, "With your permission I would go to some other forest. Continue to shower your grace on me; and knowing me to be your servant never cease loving me." Hearing these words of the Lord, who was a champion of virtue the enlightened sage lovingly replied, "You are the same Rāma (the supreme Deity), the beloved of the desireless and the friend of the meek, whose favour is sought by Brahmā (the Unborn), Lord Śiva, the sage Sanaka and all other preachers (knowers) of the highest Reality; and yet you are addressing such polite words to me. I now understand the wisdom of Śrī (Goddess Lakṣmī), who chose You (as Her lord) to the exclusion of all

other gods. How can He who is unequalled and unsurpassed by anyone else be less amiable than He is ? How can I say, 'You may go now, my lord ?' Tell me, my master, knowing as You do the hearts of all.'' Having spoken thus the sage kept gazing on the Lord, thrilling all over with emotion and his eyes flowing with tears. (1—5)

छं०—तन पुलक निर्भर प्रेम पूरन नयन मुख पंकज दिए ।
मन ग्यान गुन गोतीत प्रभु मैं दीख जप तप का किए ॥
जप जोग धर्म समूह तें नर भगति अनुपम पावई ।
रघुबीर चरित पुनीत निसि दिन दास तुलसी गावई ॥

Thrilling all over with excess of love, the sage rivetted his eyes on the Lord's lotus face. He thought to himself, "What prayers did I mutter and what austerity did I perform that I was enabled to behold with my own eyes the Lord who is beyond all knowledge and transcends the three Guṇas as well as the senses and mind. It is through Japa (muttering of prayers), Yoga (concentration of mind) and a host of religious observances that man acquires devotion, which is incomparable (as a means of God-Realization). So does Tulasīdāsa sing the all-holy exploits of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) day and night.

दो०—कलिमल समन दमन मन राम सुजस सुखमूल ।
सादर सुनहिं जे तिन्ह पर राम रहहिं अनुकूल ॥ ६ (क) ॥
सो०—कठिन काल मल कोस धर्म न ग्यान न जोग जप ।
परिहरि सकल भरोस रामहि भजहिं ते चतुर नर ॥ ६ (ख) ॥

The praises of Śrī Rāma destroy the impurities of the Kali age, subdue the mind and are a source of delight. Śrī Rāma remains ever propitious to those who listen to them with reverence. This terrible age (of Kali) is a repertory of sins; piety, spiritual wisdom, Yoga or Japa are out of place in this age. They alone, are wise, who worship Śrī Rāma giving up all other hopes. (6 A-B)

चौ०—मुनि पद कमल नाइ करि सीसा । चले बनहि सुर नर मुनि ईसा ॥
आगें राम अनुज पुनि पाछें । मुनि बर बेष बने अति काछें ॥ १ ॥
उभय बीच श्री सोहइ कैसी । ब्रह्म जीव बिच माया जैसी ॥
सरिता बन गिरि अवघट घाटा । पति पहिचानि देहिं बर बाटा ॥ २ ॥
जहँ जहँ जाहिं देव रघुराया । करहिं मेघ तहँ तहँ नभ छाया ॥
मिला असुर बिराध मग जाता । आवतहीं रघुबीर निपाता ॥ ३ ॥
तुरतहिं रुचिर रूप तेहिं पावा । देखि दुखी निज धाम पठावा ॥
पुनि आए जहँ मुनि सरभंगा । सुंदर अनुज जानकी संगा ॥ ४ ॥

Bowing His head at the lotus feet of the sage, Śrī Rāma, the Lord of celestials, human beings and sages, proceeded to the woods. Śrī Rāma walked foremost, while Lakṣmaṇa followed Him in the rear, both

appearing most lovely in the garb of hermits. Between the two Sītā (who was the same as Śrī, the Goddess of Prosperity) shone forth like Māyā, which stands between Brahma (the Absolute) and the Jīva (the individual soul). Rivers and thickets, hills and rugged valleys recognized their Lord and gave Him a smooth passage. Wherever the divine Lord of Raghus passed the clouds made a canopy in the heavens. Even as the trio wended their way the demon Virādha met them; and the Hero of Raghu's line overthrew him as soon as he made his appearance. (Meeting his death at the hands of the Lord), he immediately attained a beauteous (divine) form; finding him lead a miserable existence the Lord sent him to His own abode. Accompanied by His lovely younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Janaka's Daughter (Sītā) the Lord then visited the sage Śarabhanga. (1—4)

दो०—देखि राम मुख पंकज मुनिबर लोचन भृंग ।
सादर पान करत अति धन्य जन्म सरभंग ॥ ७ ॥

Gazing on Śrī Rāma's lotus face the eyes of the great sage reverently drank in its beauty like bees. Blessed indeed was the birth of Śarabhanga! (7)

चौ०—कह मुनि सुनु रघुबीर कृपाला । संकर मानस राजमराला ॥
जात रहेउँ बिरंचि के धामा । सुनेउँ श्रवन बन ऐहहिं रामा ॥ १ ॥
चितवत पंथ रहेउँ दिन राती । अब प्रभु देखि जुड़ानी छाती ॥
नाथ सकल साधन मैं हीना । कीन्ही कृपा जानि जन दीना ॥ २ ॥
सो कछु देव न मोहि निहोरा । निज पन राखेउ जन मन चोरा ॥
तब लगि रहहु दीन हित लागी । जब लगि मिलौं तुम्हहि तनु त्यागी ॥ ३ ॥
जोग जग्य जप तप ब्रत कीन्हा । प्रभु कहँ देइ भगति बर लीन्हा ॥
एहि बिधि सर रचि मुनि सरभंगा । बैठे हृदयँ छाड़ि सब संगा ॥ ४ ॥

Said the sage, "Listen, gracious Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line), the swan disporting in the Mānasa lake of Lord Śiva's heart: I was about to leave for Brahmā's abode when the report reached my ears that Śrī Rāma (Yourself) was coming to the forest. I have ever since watched the road day and night. My heart is now soothed at the sight of my lord. I have accomplished nothing (to deserve Your grace); yet You have shown Your grace to me knowing me to be Your humble servant. Really speaking, however, You have done me no favour, my lord; You have only redeemed Your vow, O Stealer of Your devotees' hearts! For the sake of this humble servant remain here (before my eyes) till I have quitted this body and meet You (in Your own abode)." So saying the sage offered to the Lord whatever practice of Yoga, sacrifices, Japa (muttering of prayers), penance and fasting he had done, and received in return the boon of Devotion. Having thus acquired the rare gift of Devotion the sage Śarabhanga prepared a funeral pile and discarding all attachment from his heart ascended it. (1—4)

दो०—सीता अनुज समेत प्रभु नील जलद तनु स्याम ।
मम हियँ बसहु निरंतर सगुनरूप श्रीराम ॥ ८ ॥

"Constantly abide in my heart, O Lord, with Sītā and Your younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) in Your qualified and embodied form swarthy as a dark cloud, O graceful Rāma !" (8)

चौ०—अस कहि जोग अगिनि तनु जारा । राम कृपाँ बैकुंठ सिधारा ॥
ताते मुनि हरि लीन न भयऊ । प्रथमहिं भेद भगति बर लयऊ ॥ १ ॥
रिषि निकाय मुनिबर गति देखी । सुखी भए निज हृदयँ बिसेषी ॥
अस्तुति करहिं सकल मुनि बृंदा । जयति प्रनत हित करुना कंदा ॥ २ ॥
पुनि रघुनाथ चले बन आगे । मुनिबर बृंद बिपुल सँग लागे ॥
अस्थि समूह देखि रघुराया । पूछी मुनिन्ह लागि अति दाया ॥ ३ ॥
जानतहूँ पूछिअ कस स्वामी । सबदरसी तुम्ह अंतरजामी ॥
निसिचर निकर सकल मुनि खाए । सुनि रघुबीर नयन जल छाए ॥ ४ ॥

Having said so he burnt his body with the fire of Yoga* and by the grace of Śrī Rāma rose to Vaikuṇṭha. The sage was not absorbed into the person of Śrī Hari for this simple reason that he had already received the boon of personal devotion. The multitude of sages (assembled on the occasion) who saw the high state to which the great sage had now been translated were greatly delighted at heart. All the hosts of sages now extolled the Lord, "Glory to the friend of the suppliant, the fountain of mercy." Then the Lord of Raghus went on further into the forest and many a host of great sages followed Him. Seeing a heap of bones the Lord of Raghus was moved with great compassion and enquired the hermits about the same "Though knowing everything, how is it that You ask us, our master ? We know You are all-seeing and can read the innermost feelings of all. Hosts of demons have devoured all the sages." The eyes of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's race) filled with tears when He heard this. (1–4)

दो०—निसिचर हीन करउँ महि भुज उठाइ पन कीन्ह ।
सकल मुनिन्ह के आश्रमन्हि जाइ जाइ सुख दीन्ह ॥ ९ ॥

With uplifted arms He took a vow to rid the earth of demons. Then He gladdened all the hermits by visiting their hermitages one by one. (9)

चौ०—मुनि अगस्ति कर सिष्य सुजाना । नाम सुतीछन रति भगवाना ॥
मन क्रम बचन राम पद सेवक । सपनेहुँ आन भरोस न देवक ॥ १ ॥
प्रभु आगवनु श्रवन सुनि पावा । करत मनोरथ आतुर धावा ॥
हे बिधि दीनबंधु रघुराया । मो से सठ पर करिहहिं दाया ॥ २ ॥
सहित अनुज मोहि राम गोसाईं । मिलिहहिं निज सेवक की नाईं ॥
मोरे जियँ भरोस दृढ़ नाहीं । भगति बिरति न ग्यान मन माहीं ॥ ३ ॥

* *Vide* footnote on page 74 of the Bālakāṇḍa.

नहिं सतसंग जोग जप जागा । नहिं दृढ़ चरन कमल अनुरागा ॥
एक बानि करुनानिधान की । सो प्रिय जाकें गति न आन की ॥ ४ ॥
होइहैं सुफल आजु मम लोचन । देखि बदन पंकज भव मोचन ॥
निर्भर प्रेम मगन मुनि ग्यानी । कहि न जाइ सो दसा भवानी ॥ ५ ॥
दिसि अरु बिदिसि पंथ नहिं सूझा । को मैं चलेउँ कहाँ नहिं बूझा ॥
कबहुँक फिरि पाछें पुनि जाई । कबहुँक नृत्य करइ गुन गाई ॥ ६ ॥
अबिरल प्रेम भगति मुनि पाई । प्रभु देखैं तरु ओट लुकाई ॥
अतिसय प्रीति देखि रघुबीरा । प्रगटे हृदयँ हरन भव भीरा ॥ ७ ॥
मुनि मग माझ अचल होइ बैसा । पुलक सरीर पनस फल जैसा ॥
तब रघुनाथ निकट चलि आए । देखि दसा निज जन मन भाए ॥ ८ ॥
मुनिहि राम बहु भाँति जगावा । जाग न ध्यान जनित सुख पावा ॥
भूप रूप तब राम दुरावा । हृदयँ चतुर्भुज रूप देखावा ॥ ९ ॥
मुनि अकुलाइ उठा तब कैसें । बिकल हीन मनि फनिबर जैसें ॥
आगें देखि राम तन स्यामा । सीता अनुज सहित सुख धामा ॥ १० ॥
परेउ लकुट इव चरनन्हि लागी । प्रेम मगन मुनिबर बड़भागी ॥
भुज बिसाल गहि लिए उठाई । परम प्रीति राखे उर लाई ॥ ११ ॥
मुनिहि मिलत अस सोह कृपाला । कनक तरुहि जनु भेंट तमाला ॥
राम बदनु बिलोक मुनि ठाढ़ा । मानहुँ चित्र माझ लिखि काढ़ा ॥ १२ ॥

The sage Agastya had a learned disciple, Sutīkṣṇa by name, who was a great lover of the Lord. He was devoted to Śrī Rāma's feet in thought, word and deed and had no faith in any other deity even in dream. As soon as the news of the Lord's approach reached his ears he rushed out hurriedly, indulging in his own fancy: "Will the Lord of Raghus, the befriender of the meek, O good heavens, ever show His grace to a wretch like me? Will Lord Śrī Rāma and His younger brother receive me as their own servant? I have no unswerving faith in my heart nor is my mind illumined by the light of devotion, dispassion or wisdom. I have no association with saints and practise neither Yoga (concentration of mind) nor Japa (muttering of prayers), nor the ritual. Nor do I claim any steadfast devotion to the Lord's lotus feet. I bank on one characteristic of the all-merciful Lord: He holds the devotee dear who depends exclusively on Him. This inspires me with the hope that my eyes will be rewarded today by the sight of the Lord's lotus face, that delivers one from the bondage of worldly existence." The wise sage was drowned in a flood of love; his condition, O Pārvatī, cannot be described in words. He had no idea of the four quarters, much less of the intermediate points of the compass; nor could he make out the track. He did not know who he was or whither bound. He would now turn back and then resume his journey in the same direction; and now he would dance and sing songs of praise. The sage had been gifted with devotion of the nature of intense love and the Lord watched him hiding behind a tree. When the Hero of Raghu's line, who dispels the fear of transmigration, saw the sage's excessive love, He revealed Himself in his heart. The sage sat motionless in the middle of the road,

his body bristling like a jack-fruit with its hair standing on end. The Lord of Raghus thereupon drew near and was delighted at heart to see the state of His devotee. Śrī Rāma tried many ways to rouse the sage; but he would not wake, lost as he was in the ecstasy of his vision. Srī Rāma then withdrew His kingly guise and manifested His four-armed form in the sage's heart. The sage thereupon started up in great agony, growing as restless as a noble serpent that has lost the gem on its head. But seeing before him the blissful Rāma in His swarthy form with Sītā and His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa), the great and blessed sage was overwhelmed with affection and dropped like a log at His feet. Taking him in His long arms the Lord lifted him and with utmost affection pressed him to His bosom. While embracing the sage the gracious Lord shone forth like a Tamāla tree meeting a tree of gold. The sage gazed on Śrī Rāma's face standing motionless like a figure drawn in a picture. (1—12)

दो०—तब मुनि हृदयँ धीर धरि गहि पद बारहिं बार ।
निज आश्रम प्रभु आनि करि पूजा बिबिध प्रकार ॥ १० ॥

Summoning courage in his heart and clasping His feet again and again the sage then conducted the Lord to his hermitage and offered Him homage in many ways. (10)

चौ०—कह मुनि प्रभु सुनु बिनती मोरी । अस्तुति करौं कवन बिधि तोरी ॥
महिमा अमित मोरि मति थोरी । रबि सन्मुख खद्योत अँजोरी ॥ १ ॥
श्याम तामरस दाम शरीरं । जटा मुकुट परिधन मुनिचीरं ॥
पाणि चाप शर कटि तूणीरं । नौमि निरंतर श्रीरघुवीरं ॥ २ ॥
मोह विपिन घन दहन कृशानुः । संत सरोरुह कानन भानुः ॥
निशिचर करि वरूथ मृगराजः । त्रातु सदा नो भव खग बाजः ॥ ३ ॥
अरुण नयन राजीव सुवेशं । सीता नयन चकोर निशेशं ॥
हर हृदि मानस बाल मरालं । नौमि राम उर बाहु विशालं ॥ ४ ॥
संशय सर्प ग्रसन उरगादः । शमन सुकर्कश तर्क विषादः ॥
भव भंजन रंजन सुर यूथः । त्रातु सदा नो कृपा वरूथः ॥ ५ ॥
निर्गुण सगुण विषम सम रूपं । ज्ञान गिरा गोतीतमनूपं ॥
अमलमखिलमनवद्यमपारं । नौमि राम भंजन महि भारं ॥ ६ ॥
भक्त कल्पपादप आरामः । तर्जन क्रोध लोभ मद कामः ॥
अति नागर भव सागर सेतुः । त्रातु सदा दिनकर कुल केतुः ॥ ७ ॥
अतुलित भुज प्रताप बल धामः । कलि मल विपुल विभंजन नामः ॥
धर्म वर्म नर्मद गुण ग्रामः । संतत शं तनोतु मम रामः ॥ ८ ॥
जदपि बिरज ब्यापक अबिनासी । सब के हृदयँ निरंतर बासी ॥
तदपि अनुज श्री सहित खरारी । बसतु मनसि मम काननचारी ॥ ९ ॥
जे जानहिं ते जानहुँ स्वामी । सगुन अगुन उर अंतरजामी ॥
जो कोसल पति राजिव नयना । करउ सो राम हृदय मम अयना ॥ १० ॥

अस अभिमान जाइ जनि भोरे । मैं सेवक रघुपति पति मोरे ॥
सुनि मुनि बचन राम मन भाए । बहुरि हरषि मुनिबर उर लाए ॥ ११ ॥
परम प्रसन्न जानु मुनि मोही । जो बर मागहु देउँ सो तोही ॥
मुनि कह मैं बर कबहुँ न जाचा । समुझि न परइ झूठ का साचा ॥ १२ ॥
तुम्हहि नीक लागै रघुराई । सो मोहि देहु दास सुखदाई ॥
अबिरल भगति बिरति बिग्याना । होहु सकल गुन ग्यान निधाना ॥ १३ ॥
प्रभु जो दीन्ह सो बरु मैं पावा । अब सो देहु मोहि जो भावा ॥ १४ ॥

Said the sage, "Listen, O Lord, to my prayer: how am I to hymn Your praises? For immeasurable is Your glory and scant my wit, which is as insignificant as the flash of a fire-fly before the sun. I constantly glorify Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus), with a body dark as a string of blue lotuses, wearing a crown of matted locks on His head and clad in a hermit's robes, and carrying a bow and arrow in His hands with a quiver fastened to His waist. The fire which consumes the thick forest of delusion, the sun that brings delight to the lotus-like saints, the lion who kills the herd of elephants in the form of demons, the hawk that kills the bird of metempsychosis, may He ever protect us. I extol Śrī Rāma, whose eyes resemble the red lotus, who is elegantly dressed, who is a full moon to Sītā's Chakora-like eyes, who is a cygnet disporting in the Mānasa lake of Lord Śiva's heart and who has a broad chest and long arms. A Garuḍa to devour the serpent of doubt, the queller of despair induced by heartless controversy, the uprooter of transmigration, the delighter of gods, the embodiment of compassion, may He ever protect us. I sing the praises of Śrī Rāma, the reliever of earth's burden, who is both with and without attributes, who is partial as well as impartial, who transcends knowledge, speech and the senses and has no compeer, nay, who is all-pure, all-comprehensive, faultless and unlimited. A veritable garden of wish-yielding trees to His devotees, who keeps away wrath, greed, pride and lust, who is most urbane in manners and the bridge to cross the ocean of mundane existence, may that champion of the solar race ever protect me. Matchless in power of arm, the home of strength, the armour for the protection of righteousness, endowed with a host of delightful virtues, may that Rāma whose very Name wipes out the greatest sins of the Kali age, be ever propitious to me. Even though He is passionless, all-pervading, imperishable and ever dwelling in the heart of all, let Him abide in my thoughts as the Slayer of Khara roaming about in the woods with His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Sītā. Let alone, my lord, those who know You to be both with and without attributes and the witness of all hearts. As for myself may Śrī Rāma, the lotus-eyed Lord of Kosala, take up His abode in my heart. Let not this exalted feeling disappear from my mind even in an unguarded moment that I am His servant and the Lord of Raghus my master." Śrī Rāma was delighted at heart to hear the sage's words, and in His delight He pressed the great sage to His bosom again. "Know Me to be supremely pleased, O sage; I am prepared to grant you any boon you may choose to ask." The sage replied, "I have never asked any boon and know not what is real and what unreal (what to choose and what to reject). Therefore, O Delighter of Your devotees, grant me that which pleases You, O Lord of Raghus." "May

you become a repository of worldly wisdom and goodness as well as of intense devotion, dispassion and spiritual wisdom." "I have received the boon that my Lord has been pleased to grant. Now vouchsafe to me that which is cherished by me.

(1—14)

दो०—अनुज जानकी सहित प्रभु चाप बान धर राम ।
मम हिय गगन इंदु इव बसहु सदा निहकाम ॥ ११ ॥

"Armed with a bow and arrow and accompanied by Your younger brother and Janaka's Daughter (Sītā), O Lord Śrī Rāma, pray dwell for ever like a moon in the firmament of my heart, though free from every desire." (11)

चौ०—एवमस्तु करि रमानिवासा । हरषि चले कुंभज रिषि पासा ॥
बहुत दिवस गुर दरसनु पाएँ । भए मोहि एहिं आश्रम आएँ ॥ १ ॥
अब प्रभु संग जाउँ गुर पाहीं । तुम्ह कहँ नाथ निहोरा नाहीं ॥
देखि कृपानिधि मुनि चतुराई । लिए संग बिहसे द्वौ भाई ॥ २ ॥
पंथ कहत निज भगति अनूपा । मुनि आश्रम पहुँचे सुरभूपा ॥
तुरत सुतीछन गुर पहिं गयऊ । करि दंडवत कहत अस भयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
नाथ कोसलाधीस कुमारा । आए मिलन जगत आधारा ॥
राम अनुज समेत बैदेही । निसि दिनु देव जपत हहु जेही ॥ ४ ॥
सुनत अगस्ति तुरत उठि धाए । हरि बिलोकि लोचन जल छाए ॥
मुनि पद कमल परे द्वौ भाई । रिषि अति प्रीति लिए उर लाई ॥ ५ ॥
सादर कुसल पूछि मुनि ग्यानी । आसन बर बैठारे आनी ॥
पुनि करि बहु प्रकार प्रभु पूजा । मोहि सम भाग्यवंत नहिं दूजा ॥ ६ ॥
जहँ लगि रहे अपर मुनि बृंदा । हरषे सब बिलोकि सुखकंदा ॥ ७ ॥

"So be it," said Śrī Rāma (the Abode of Lakṣmī) as He joyously started on His visit to the jar-born sage, Agastya. "It is a long time since I last saw my Guru and came to live in this hermitage. Now, my lord, I will go with You to see my Guru; thus I am not putting You under any obligation." The Fountain of Mercy saw through the sage's cleverness and both the brothers smiled as they took him with them. Discoursing on the way on the incomparable cult of devotion to His own feet Śrī Rāma (the King of the gods) arrived at the hermitage of the sage (Agastya). Sutīkṣṇa immediately saw his Guru and after prostrating himself before the latter thus addressed him, "My lord, the two sons of King Daśaratha (Kosala's lord), the support of the world, have come to see you,—Śrī Rāma, accompanied by His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Videha's Daughter (Sītā), whose Name you repeat night and day, venerable sir." Agastya started up as soon as he heard this and ran; at the sight of Śrī Hari his eyes filled with tears. The two brothers fell at the sage's lotus feet; but the sage took and clasped them to his bosom with the utmost affection. Courteously enquiring after their welfare the enlightened sage conducted them to an exalted seat and then offered worship in various ways to the Lord, saying "There is no other man so blessed as I am." Whatever other sages had assembled there, were all delighted to behold the Fountain of Joy.

(1—7)

दो०--मुनि समूह महँ बैठे सन्मुख सब की ओर ।
सरद इंदु तन चितवत मानहुँ निकर चकोर ॥ १२ ॥

As He sat in the midst of the assembly of sages with His face turned towards all (and their eyes fixed on His moon-like face), they seemed like a bevy of Chakora birds gazing on the autumnal moon. (12)

चौ०—तब रघुबीर कहा मुनि पाहीं । तुम्ह सन प्रभु दुराव कछु नाहीं ॥
तुम्ह जानहु जेहि कारन आयउँ । ताते तात न कहि समुझायउँ ॥ १ ॥
अब सो मंत्र देहु प्रभु मोही । जेहि प्रकार मारौं मुनिद्रोही ॥
मुनि मुसुकाने सुनि प्रभु बानी । पूछेहु नाथ मोहि का जानी ॥ २ ॥
तुम्हरेइँ भजन प्रभाव अघारी । जानउँ महिमा कछुक तुम्हारी ॥
ऊमरि तरु बिसाल तव माया । फल ब्रह्मांड अनेक निकाया ॥ ३ ॥
जीव चराचर जंतु समाना । भीतर बसहिं न जानहिं आना ॥
ते फल भच्छक कठिन कराला । तव भयँ डरत सदा सोउ काला ॥ ४ ॥
ते तुम्ह सकल लोकपति साईं । पूँछेहु मोहि मनुज की नाईं ॥
यह बर मागउँ कृपानिकेता । बसहु हृदयँ श्री अनुज समेता ॥ ५ ॥
अबिरल भगति बिरति सतसंगा । चरन सरोरुह प्रीति अभंगा ॥
जद्यपि ब्रह्म अखंड अनंता । अनुभव गम्य भजहिं जेहि संता ॥ ६ ॥
अस तव रूप बखानउँ जानउँ । फिरि फिरि सगुन ब्रह्म रति मानउँ ॥
संतत दासन्ह देहु बड़ाई । तातें मोहि पूँछेहु रघुराई ॥ ७ ॥
है प्रभु परम मनोहर ठाऊँ । पावन पंचबटी तेहि नाऊँ ॥
दंडक बन पुनीत प्रभु करहू । उग्र साप मुनिबर कर हरहू ॥ ८ ॥
बास करहु तहँ रघुकुल राया । कीजे सकल मुनिन्ह पर दाया ॥
चले राम मुनि आयसु पाई । तुरतहिं पंचबटी निअराई ॥ ९ ॥

Then said Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) to the sage, "I have nothing to hide from you, my lord. You know what for I have come; that is why, holy father, I have not dwelt at length on this point. Now, my good sir, give me some advice, by following which I may be able to kill the enemies of the hermits." The sage smiled when he heard the Lord's remarks. "With what intention have You asked me this question ? It is by virtue of my devotion to You, O Destroyer of sins, that I know a bit of Your glory. Your Māyā (Creative Energy) is like a huge tree of the species known by the name of Udumbara, with the countless multitudes of universes for its clustering fruits. The animate and inanimate beings (inhabiting the various universes) are like the insects that dwell inside the fruits and know of no other fruit (besides the one they inhabit). The relentless and dreadful Time-spirit devours these fruits; but even that (all-devouring) Time ever trembles in fear of You. You, who are the suzerain lord of all the regional lords, have asked my advice as though You were an ordinary human being. I ask this boon of You, O Home of Mercy: pray dwell in my heart with Your Spouse (Sītā) and younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and let me have intense devotion,

dispassion, fellowship with the saints and unbroken love for Your lotus feet. Even though I know You to be the same as the indivisible and infinite Brahma (the Absolute), who can only be realized (and cannot be known by any other means) and is adored by the saints, and even though I depict You as such, I feel enamoured of Your qualified form again and again. You have always exalted Your servants; that is why You have thought fit to consult me, O Lord of Raghus. There is, my lord, a most charming and holy spot; it is called Pañchavaṭī. Sanctify the Daṇḍaka forest (where it is situated) and redeem it from the terrible curse of the great sage (Śukrāchārya). Take up Your abode there, O Lord of Raghu's line, and show Your grace to all the sages.'' On receiving the sage's permission Śrī Rāma departed and drew near to Pañchavaṭī in no time.

(1—9)

दो०—गीधराज सैं भेंट भइ बहु बिधि प्रीति बढ़ाइ ।
गोदावरी निकट प्रभु रहे परन गृह छाइ ॥ १३ ॥

He met Jaṭāyu (the king of vultures); and developing friendship with him in many ways the Lord stayed near the Godāvarī, where He made Himself a thatched hut of leaves.

(13)

चौ०—जब ते राम कीन्ह तहँ बासा । सुखी भए मुनि बीती त्रासा ॥
गिरि बन नदीं ताल छबि छाए । दिन दिन प्रति अति होहिं सुहाए ॥ १ ॥
खग मृग बृंद अनंदित रहहीं । मधुप मधुर गुंजत छबि लहहीं ॥
सो बन बरनि न सक अहिराजा । जहाँ प्रगट रघुबीर बिराजा ॥ २ ॥
एक बार प्रभु सुख आसीना । लछिमन बचन कहे छलहीना ॥
सुर नर मुनि सचराचर साईं । मैं पूछउँ निज प्रभु की नाईं ॥ ३ ॥
मोहि समुझाइ कहहु सोइ देवा । सब तजि करौं चरन रज सेवा ॥
कहहु ग्यान बिराग अरु माया । कहहु सो भगति करहु जेहिं दाया ॥ ४ ॥

From the time Śrī Rāma took up His abode there the sages lived happily and were rid of all fear. The hills, woods, streams and lakes were suffused with beauty and grew yet more lovely day by day. The birds and deer were full of joy, and the bees with their sweet humming looked very charming. Not even Śeṣa (the king of serpents) would be able to describe the forest which was adorned by Śrī Rāma (the Chief of Raghus) in His manifest form. Once upon a time, as the Lord was sitting at ease, Lakṣmaṇa addressed Him in guileless words: ''O Lord of gods, human beings, sages and all animate and inanimate creation ! I ask of You as of my own master. Instruct me, my lord, how I may be able to adore the dust of Your feet to the exclusion of everything else. Discourse to me on spiritual wisdom and dispassion as well as on Māyā (Illusion); and also speak to me about Bhakti (devotion), which You make an occasion for showering Your grace.

(1—4)

दो०—ईस्वर जीव भेद प्रभु सकल कहौ समुझाइ ।
जातें होइ चरन रति सोक मोह भ्रम जाइ ॥ १४ ॥

"Also explain to me all the difference between God and the individual soul, so that I may be devoted to Your feet and my sorrow, infatuation and delusion may disappear." (14)

चौ०—थोरेहि महँ सब कहउँ बुझाई । सुनहु तात मति मन चित लाई ॥
मैं अरु मोर तोर तैं माया । जेहिं बस कीन्हे जीव निकाया ॥ १ ॥
गो गोचर जहँ लगि मन जाई । सो सब माया जानेहु भाई ॥
तेहि कर भेद सुनहु तुम्ह सोऊ । बिद्या अपर अबिद्या दोऊ ॥ २ ॥
एक दुष्ट अतिसय दुखरूपा । जा बस जीव परा भवकूपा ॥
एक रचइ जग गुन बस जाकें । प्रभु प्रेरित नहिं निज बल ताकें ॥ ३ ॥
ग्यान मान जहँ एकउ नाहीं । देख ब्रह्म समान सब माहीं ॥
कहिअ तात सो परम बिरागी । तृन सम सिद्धि तीनि गुन त्यागी ॥ ४ ॥

"I will explain everything in a nutshell; listen, dear brother, with your mind, intellect and reason fully absorbed. The feeling of 'I' and 'mine' and 'you' and 'yours' is Māyā (Illusion), which holds sway over all created beings. Whatever is perceived by the senses and that which lies within the reach of the mind, know it all to be Māyā. And hear of its divisions too: they are two, viz., knowledge and ignorance. The one (ignorance) is vile and extremely painful, and has cast the ego into the sink of worldly existence. The other (knowledge), which brings forth the creation and which holds sway over the three Guṇas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) is directed by the Lord and has no strength of its own. Spiritual wisdom is that which is free from all blemishes in the shape of pride* etc. and which sees the Supreme Spirit equally in all. He alone, dear brother, should be called a man of supreme dispassion, who has spurned all supernatural powers as well as the three Guṇas (of which the universe is composed) as if of no more account than a blade of grass. (1–4)

दो०—माया ईस न आपु कहुँ जान कहिअ सो जीव ।
बंध मोच्छ प्रद सर्बपर माया प्रेरक सीव ॥ १५ ॥

* *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* enumerates the following characteristics which make for spiritual wisdom. They are: absence of pride, freedom from hypocrisy, non-violence, forgiveness, guilelessness, devout service of one's preceptor, purity of body and mind, steadfastness, subjugation of the mind, aversion to the objects of sense, absence of egotism, pondering again and again on the painful character of and the evils inherent in birth, death, old age and disease; absence of attachment and the feeling of mineness in respect of one's son, wife, home, etc. and constant equipoise of mind both in favourable and unfavourable circumstances; unflinching devotion to the Lord through exclusive attachment; living in secluded and holy places and finding no enjoyment in the company of men; fixity in self-knowledge and seeing God as the object of true knowledge (*vide* XIII. 7—11). The definition given here negates the opposites of these virtues, viz., pride, hypocrisy, violence and so on. The definition may be interpreted in a different way as well. It may be taken to mean that spiritual wisdom cannot be attained through the ordinary means of cognition (Mānas or Pramāṇas) such as perception, inference, verbal testimony and so on; it is self-evident (स्वतःप्रमाण).

"That alone deserves to be called a Jīva (individual soul), which knows not Māyā nor God nor one's own self. And Śiva (God) is He who awards bondage and liberation (according to one's deserts), transcends all and is the controller of Māyā. (15)

चौ०—धर्म तें बिरति जोग तें ग्याना । ग्यान मोच्छप्रद बेद बखाना ॥
जातें बेगि द्रवउँ मैं भाई । सो मम भगति भगत सुखदाई ॥ १ ॥
सो सुतंत्र अवलंब न आना । तेहि आधीन ग्यान बिग्याना ॥
भगति तात अनुपम सुखमूला । मिलइ जो संत होइँ अनुकूला ॥ २ ॥
भगति कि साधन कहउँ बखानी । सुगम पंथ मोहि पावहिं प्रानी ॥
प्रथमहिं बिप्र चरन अति प्रीती । निज निज कर्म निरत श्रुति रीती ॥ ३ ॥
एहि कर फल पुनि बिषय बिरागा । तब मम धर्म उपज अनुरागा ॥
श्रवनादिक नव भक्ति दृढ़ाहीं । मम लीला रति अति मन माहीं ॥ ४ ॥
संत चरन पंकज अति प्रेमा । मन क्रम बचन भजन दृढ़ नेमा ॥
गुरु पितु मातु बंधु पति देवा । सब मोहि कहँ जानै दृढ़ सेवा ॥ ५ ॥
मम गुन गावत पुलक सरीरा । गदगद गिरा नयन बह नीरा ॥
काम आदि मद दंभ न जाकें । तात निरंतर बस मैं ताकें ॥ ६ ॥

"Dispassion results from the practice of virtue, while spiritual wisdom comes of the practice of Yoga (concentration of mind); and wisdom is the bestower of liberation: so declare the Vedas. And that which melts My heart quickly, dear brother, is Devotion, which is the delight of My devotees. It stands by itself and requires no other prop; whereas Jñāna (knowledge of God in His absolute formless aspect) and Vijñāna (knowledge of the qualified aspect of God, both with and without form) depend on it. Devotion, dear brother, is incomparable and the very root of bliss; it can be acquired only by the favour of a saint. I now proceed to tell you at some length the means of acquiring Devotion, an easy path by which men find Me. In the first place a man should cultivate excessive devotion to the feet of the Brahmans and secondly he should remain engaged in his own duty according to the lines laid down by the Vedas. This induces an aversion to the pleasures of sense and dispassion in its turn engenders a love for My Cult (the Cult of Devotion). This will bring steadfastness in the nine forms of Devotion* such as Śravaṇa (hearing of the Lord's praises etc.) and the mind will develop an excessive fondness for My sports. Again, one should be extremely devoted to the lotus feet of saints and should be persistent in the practice of adoration through mind, speech and action. He should recognize Me as his preceptor,

* The nine forms of Devotion as enumerated in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* are: (1) Śravaṇa (hearing of the Lord's praises and stories), (2) Kīrtana (chanting His Name, praises and stories), (3) Smaraṇa (fixing one's thought on Him), (4) Pādasevana (adoring His feet), (5) Archana (worshipping an image of the Lord), (6) Vandana (making obeisance to Him), (7) Dāsya (offering devout service to the Lord), (8) Sakhya (cultivating friendship with Him) and (9) Ātmanivedana (offering oneself to the Lord)

father, mother, kinsman, lord, deity and all and should be steadfast in My service. A thrill runs through his body as he sings My praises; his voice gets choked and his eyes flow with tears; he is free from lust and other vices, pride and hypocrisy. I am ever at the beck and call of such a devotee. (1—6)

दो०—वचन कर्म मन मोरि गति भजनु करहिं निःकाम ।
तिन्ह के हृदय कमल महुँ करउँ सदा बिश्राम ॥ १६ ॥

"Nay, I ever repose in the lotus heart of those who depend on Me in thought, word and deed and who worship Me in a disinterested way." (16)

चौ०—भगति जोग सुनि अति सुख पावा । लछिमन प्रभु चरनन्हि सिरु नावा ॥
एहि बिधि गए कछुक दिन बीती । कहत बिराग ग्यान गुन नीती ॥ १ ॥
सूपनखा रावन कै बहिनी । दुष्ट हृदय दारुन जस अहिनी ॥
पंचबटी सो गइ एक बारा । देखि बिकल भइ जुगल कुमारा ॥ २ ॥
भ्राता पिता पुत्र उरगारी । पुरुष मनोहर निरखत नारी ॥
होइ बिकल सक मनहि न रोकी । जिमि रबिमनि द्रव रबिहि बिलोकी ॥ ३ ॥
रुचिर रूप धरि प्रभु पहिं जाई । बोली बचन बहुत मुसुकाई ॥
तुम्ह सम पुरुष न मो सम नारी । यह सँजोग बिधि रचा बिचारी ॥ ४ ॥
मम अनुरूप पुरुष जग माहीं । देखेउँ खोजि लोक तिहु नाहीं ॥
तातें अब लगि रहिउँ कुमारी । मनु माना कछु तुम्हहि निहारी ॥ ५ ॥
सीतहि चितइ कही प्रभु बाता । अहइ कुआर मोर लघु भ्राता ॥
गइ लछिमन रिपु भगिनी जानी । प्रभु बिलोकि बोले मृदु बानी ॥ ६ ॥
सुंदरि सुनु मैं उन्ह कर दासा । पराधीन नहिं तोर सुपासा ॥
प्रभु समर्थ कोसलपुर राजा । जो कछु करहिं उनहि सब छाजा ॥ ७ ॥
सेवक सुख चह मान भिखारी । ब्यसनी धन सुभ गति बिभिचारी ॥
लोभी जसु चह चार गुमानी । नभ दुहि दूध चहत ए प्रानी ॥ ८ ॥
पुनि फिरि राम निकट सो आई । प्रभु लछिमन पहिं बहुरि पठाई ॥
लछिमन कहा तोहि सो बरई । जो तृन तोरि लाज परिहरई ॥ ९ ॥
तब खिसिआनि राम पहिं गई । रूप भयंकर प्रगटत भई ॥
सीतहि सभय देखि रघुराई । कहा अनुज सन सयन बुझाई ॥ १० ॥

Lakṣmaṇa was greatly delighted to hear the above discourse on the discipline of Bhakti (Devotion) and bowed his head at the feet of the Lord In this way some days were spent in discoursing on dispassion, spiritual wisdom, goodness and morality. Now Rāvaṇa (the notorious demon king of Laṅkā) had a sister, Śūrpaṇakhā (*lit.*, a woman having nails as big as a winnowing fan) by name, who was foul-hearted and cruel as a serpent She once went to Pañchavaṭī and was smitten with pangs of love at the sight of the two princes. At the very sight of a handsome man, be he her own brother, father or son, O Garuḍa, a (wanton) woman gets excited and cannot restrain her passion, even as the sun-stone emits fire when it is brought in front of the sun. Having

assumed a charming form she approached the Lord and with many a smile addressed the following words to Him: "There is no man like you and no woman like me. It is with great deliberation that God has made this pair. I have ransacked the three spheres but have found no suitable match for me in the whole universe. It is for this reason that I have till now remained a virgin; my mind has been set at rest a bit only after seeing you" The Lord cast a glance at Sītā and said only this much: "My younger brother is a bachelor." She went to Lakṣmaṇa, who, knowing that she was their enemy's sister, looked at his lord and spoke in gentle tones: "Listen, fair lady: I am His servant and a dependant; thus you will have no comforts with me. My lord is all powerful and the sovereign king of Kosalapura (Ayodhyā); whatever He does will be worthy of Him. A servant who aspires for happiness, a beggar who expects honour, a person addicted to some vice who hopes for riches, a profligate who seeks a blessed state after death, an avaricious man who covets fame and a proud man who expects the four prizes of life—all these men expect to get milk by milking the heavens." Again she turned and came to Śrī Rāma; but the Lord sent her back to Lakṣmaṇa. Said Lakṣmaṇa, "He alone will wed you, who deliberately casts all shame to the winds." Thereupon she went fretting and foaming to Śrī Rāma and revealed her frightful demoniac form. The Lord of Raghus saw that Sītā was terrified and made a sign to His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa). (1—10)

दो०—लछिमन अति लाघवँ सो नाक कान बिनु कीन्हि ।
ताके कर रावन कहँ मनौ चुनौती दीन्हि ॥ १७ ॥

With great agility Lakṣmaṇa struck off her nose and ears, thereby inviting Rāvaṇa through her to a contest as it were. (17)

चौ०—नाक कान बिनु भइ बिकरारा । जनु स्रव सैल गेरु कै धारा ॥
खर दूषन पहिं गइ बिलपाता । धिग धिग तव पौरुष बल भ्राता ॥ १ ॥
तेहिं पूछा सब कहेसि बुझाई । जातुधान सुनि सेन बनाई ॥
धाए निसिचर निकर बरूथा । जनु सपच्छ कज्जल गिरि जूथा ॥ २ ॥
नाना बाहन नानाकारा । नानायुध धर घोर अपारा ॥
सूपनखा आगें करि लीनी । असुभ रूप श्रुति नासा हीनी ॥ ३ ॥
असगुन अमित होहिं भयकारी । गनहिं न मृत्यु बिबस सब झारी ॥
गर्जहिं तर्जहिं गगन उड़ाहीं । देखि कटकु भट अति हरषाहीं ॥ ४ ॥
कोउ कह जिअत धरहु द्वौ भाई । धरि मारहु तिय लेहु छड़ाई ॥
धूरि पूरि नभ मंडल रहा । राम बोलाइ अनुज सन कहा ॥ ५ ॥
लै जानकिहि जाहु गिरि कंदर । आवा निसिचर कटकु भयंकर ॥
रहेहु सजग सुनि प्रभु कै बानी । चले सहित श्री सर धनु पानी ॥ ६ ॥
देखि राम रिपुदल चलि आवा । बिहसि कठिन कोदंड चढ़ावा ॥ ७ ॥

Without nose and ears she wore a hideous aspect and looked like a mountain flowing with torrents of red ochre. She went sobbing to Khara and Dūṣaṇa: "Fie, fie upon your manhood and strength, brothers!" Questioned by

them. she told them everything in detail; hearing her report the demon chiefs gathered an army. Swarming multitudes of demons of diverse shapes rushed forth like hosts of winged mountains of collyrium on vehicles of various kinds. They were infinite in number and were armed with terrible weapons of various kinds. They placed at their head Śūrpaṇakhā shorn of her ears and nose and thus presenting an inauspicious sight. Numberless ill-omens of a fearful nature occurred to them; but the host heeded them not, doomed as they all were to death. They roared and bullied and sprang in the air; and the champions were filled with excessive joy to see the army. Said one, "Capture the two brothers alive and having captured them kill them and carry off the woman." The vault of heaven was overhung with the dust raised by them. (Seeing this) Śrī Rāma called His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and said, "Take Janaka's Daughter to some mountain-cave; a terrible array of demons has come. Therefore, remain on your guard." Obedient to his lord's command he withdrew (to a safe retreat) with Sītā, bow and arrow in hand. When Śrī Rāma saw that the hostile force had advanced, He smiled as He strung His formidable bow (1—7)

छं०—कोदंड कठिन चढ़ाइ सिर जट जूट बाँधत सोह क्यों ।
मरकत सयल पर लरत दामिनि कोटि सों जुग भुजग ज्यों ॥
कटि कसि निषंग बिसाल भुज गहि चाप बिसिख सुधारि कै ।
चितवत मनहुँ मृगराज प्रभु गजराज घटा निहारि कै ॥

As He coiled His matted locks into a tuft on His head after stringing His formidable bow, it seemed as if a pair of snakes were engaged in a conflict with countless streaks of lightning on a mountain of emerald. Having girded up His quiver at His waist, and clasping the bow with His long arms and putting His arrows in order, He looked at the enemy even as a lion (the king of the beasts) would glare at a herd of large elephants.

सो०—आइ गए बगमेल धरहु धरहु धावत सुभट ।
जथा बिलोकि अकेल बाल रबिहि घेरत दनुज ॥ १८ ॥

Valiant champions came rushing with all speed shouting "Seize him, seize him !" even as the demons* close round upon the rising sun finding it all alone. (18)

चौ०—प्रभु बिलोकि सर सकहिं न डारी । थकित भई रजनीचर धारी ॥
सचिव बोलि बोले खर दूषन । यह कोउ नृपबालक नर भूषन ॥ १ ॥
नाग असुर सुर नर मुनि जेते । देखे जिते हते हम केते ॥
हम भरि जन्म सुनहु सब भाई । देखी नहिं असि सुंदरताई ॥ २ ॥

* It is mentioned in our scriptures that a special class of demons known by the name of 'Mandehas' close round upon the rising sun, weapons in hand, every morning and are driven away by the drops of water thrown into the air by way of 'Arghya' in course of the 'Sandhyā' prayer. Thus it is all the more necessary that every member of the twice-born classes should perform his Sandhyā before sunrise every morning without fail.

जद्यपि भगिनी कीन्हि कुरूपा । बध लायक नहिं पुरुष अनूपा ॥
देहु तुरत निज नारि दुराई । जीअत भवन जाहु द्वौ भाई ॥ ३ ॥
मोर कहा तुम्ह ताहि सुनावहु । तासु बचन सुनि आतुर आवहु ॥
दूतन्ह कहा राम सन जाई । सुनत राम बोले मुसुकाई ॥ ४ ॥
हम छत्री मृगया बन करहीं । तुम्ह से खल मृग खोजत फिरहीं ॥
रिपु बलवंत देखि नहिं डरहीं । एक बार कालहु सन लरहीं ॥ ५ ॥
जद्यपि मनुज दनुज कुल घालक । मुनि पालक खल सालक बालक ॥
जौं न होइ बल घर फिरि जाहू । समर बिमुख मैं हतउँ न काहू ॥ ६ ॥
रन चढ़ि करिअ कपट चतुराई । रिपु पर कृपा परम कदराई ॥
दूतन्ह जाइ तुरत सब कहेऊ । सुनि खर दूषन उर अति दहेऊ ॥ ७ ॥

Even as they beheld the Lord the invading warriors could not discharge their arrows; the whole demon host became powerless. Khara snd Dūṣaṇa summoned their ministers and said, "This prince, whoever he may be, is an ornament of the human race. Of all the Nāgas, demons, gods, human beings and sages that exist (in this universe) we have seen, vanquished or slain many. But during our whole life, listen to us, our brethren all, we have never beheld such beauty. Even though he has disfigured our sister, he does not deserve death, peerless as he is among men. 'Surrender to us at once the woman you have put in hiding somewhere and return home with your life, both you and your brother.' Deliver this message of mine to him and return immediately with his reply." The heralds went to Śrī Rāma and delivered the message to Him, in reply to which Śrī Rāma smilingly said, "We are Ksatriyas by birth and are given to hunting in the woods; wretches like you are the game that we are tracking. We are never dismayed at the sight of a mighty foe and would give battle to Death himself if he ever appeared before us. Though human beings, we are the exterminators of the race of demons and, though youthful in appearance, we are the protectors of the hermits and the torment of the wicked. If you have no strength to fight, you had better return home; I will never kill an enemy who has turned his back upon the field of battle. When you have come up to fight, it would be the height of weakness to play wily pranks or to show compassion to your enemy." The heralds returned forthwith and repeated all that they had been told. The heart of Khara and Dūṣaṇa was on fire when they heard it.

(1—7)

छं०--उर दहेउ कहेउ कि धरहु धाए बिकट भट रजनीचरा ।
सर चाप तोमर सक्ति सूल कृपान परिघ परसु धरा ॥
प्रभु कीन्हि धनुष टकोर प्रथम कठोर घोर भयावहा ।
भए बधिर ब्याकुल जातुधान न ग्यान तेहि अवसर रहा ॥

Their heart was on fire and they exclaimed, "Capture him," hearing which fierce demon champions rushed forth, all armed with bows and arrows, steel clubs, pikes, spears, scimitars, maces and axes. First of all the Lord gave His bow a

twang—shrill, terrific and fearful—, which deafened the ears of and dismayed the demons, who had no sense left in them.

दो०—सावधान होइ धाए जानि सबल आराति ।
लागे बरषन राम पर अस्त्र सस्त्र बहुभाँति ॥ १९ (क) ॥
तिन्ह के आयुध तिल सम करि काटे रघुबीर ।
तानि सरासन श्रवन लगि पुनि छाँड़े निज तीर ॥ १९ (ख) ॥

Having learnt that they were confronting a powerful enemy, the demon warriors now rushed with caution and began to hurl missiles and weapons of various kinds on Śrī Rāma. The Hero of Raghu's line, however, tore them into pieces as small as sesamum seeds and then drawing the bow-string to His ear let fly His own arrows. (19 A-B)

छं०—तब चले बान कराल । फुंकरत जनु बहु ब्याल ॥
कोपेउ समर श्रीराम । चले बिसिख निसित निकाम ॥ १ ॥
अवलोकि खरतर तीर । मुरि चले निसिचर बीर ॥
भए क्रुद्ध तीनिउ भाइ । जो भागि रन ते जाइ ॥ २ ॥
तेहि बधब हम निज पानि । फिरे मरन मन महुँ ठानि ॥
आयुध अनेक प्रकार । सनमुख ते करहिं प्रहार ॥ ३ ॥
रिपु परम कोपे जानि । प्रभु धनुष सर संधानि ॥
छाँड़े बिपुल नाराच । लगे कटन बिकट पिसाच ॥ ४ ॥
उर सीस भुज कर चरन । जहँ तहँ लगे महि परन ॥
चिक्करत लागत बान । धर परत कुधर समान ॥ ५ ॥
भट कटत तन सत खंड । पुनि उठत करि पाषंड ॥
नभ उड़त बहु भुज मुंड । बिनु मौलि धावत रुंड ॥ ६ ॥
खग कंक काक सृगाल । कटकटहिं कठिन कराल ॥ ७ ॥

Then the terrible arrows sped forth, hissing like so many serpents. Śrī Rāma got infuriated in battle and arrows, exceedingly sharp, flew from His bow. The demon warriors turned and fled when they found the arrows so very keen. The three brothers (Khara, Dūṣaṇa and Triśirā) now flew into rage: "Whoever flees from the battle-field will be killed by us with our own hands." At this the warriors turned back, fully resolved to die, and made a frontal attack with weapons of every description. Perceiving that the enemy was exceedingly furious, the Lord fitted arrows to His bow and discharged many a shaft of the 'Nārācha' type with the result that frightful fiends began to be mowed down. Trunks, heads, arms, hands and feet began to drop to the ground here, there and everywhere. Pierced by shafts, they yelled and their trunks fell like mountains. The bodies of the warriors were torn into a hundred pieces and resorting to

deceptive methods they stood up again. A number of arms and heads flew through the air and headless trunks ran to and fro Birds like kites and crows and jackals wrangled in a cruel and awful way. (1—7)

छं०—कटकटहिं जंबुक भूत प्रेत पिसाच खर्पर संचहीं।
बेताल बीर कपाल ताल बजाइ जोगिनि नंचहीं॥
रघुबीर बान प्रचंड खंडहिं भटन्ह के उर भुज सिरा।
जहँ तहँ परहिं उठि लरहिं धर धरु धरु करहिं भयकर गिरा॥ १ ॥
अंतावरीं गहि उड़त गीध पिसाच कर गहि धावहीं।
संग्राम पुर बासी मनहुँ बहु बाल गुड़ी उड़ावहीं॥
मारे पछारे उर बिदारे बिपुल भट कहँरत परे।
अवलोकि निज दल बिकल भट तिसिरादि खर दूषन फिरे॥ २ ॥
सर सक्ति तोमर परसु सूल कृपान एकहि बारहीं।
करि कोप श्रीरघुबीर पर अगनित निसाचर डारहीं॥
प्रभु निमिष महुँ रिपु सर निवारि पचारि डारे सायका।
दस दस बिसिख उर माझ मारे सकल निसिचर नायका॥ ३ ॥
महि परत उठि भट भिरत मरत न करत माया अति घनी।
सुर डरत चौदह सहस प्रेत बिलोकि एक अवध धनी॥
सुर मुनि सभय प्रभु देखि मायानाथ अति कौतुक कर्‌यो।
देखहिं परसपर राम करि संग्राम रिपुदल लरि मर्‌यो॥ ४ ॥

Jackals wrangled; ghosts, spirits and fiends filled the bowls of skulls with blood: devils clashed the heads of slain warriors like cymbals and the Yoginis* danced. Śrī Rāma's fierce arrows tore to pieces the leaders' breast, arms and heads; their bodies fell on every side but stood up again to fight with terrible cries of "Seize, capture!" Vultures flew away with the end of entrails in their claws, while goblins scampered with the other end held in their hands: one might fancy numberless children of the town of the battle-field were flying kites. A large number of champions, that had been smitten or knocked down or whose breast had been torn, lay moaning. Finding their army in distress leaders like Triśirā, Khara and Dūṣaṇa turned towards Śrī Rāma. Countless demons hurled furiously against the Hero of Raghu's line arrows, spears, iron clubs, axes, javelins and daggers all at once. In the twinkling of an eye the Lord warded off the enemy's shafts and sent forth His own arrows, planting ten shafts in the breast of each champion of the demon host. The leaders fell to the ground but rose again and joined in the fray. Yet they would not die and played very

* A class of female attendants on Lord Śiva or Goddess Durgā, who are generally believed to be sixty-four in number.

many tricks. The gods trembled with fear when they saw that the demons numbered fourteen thousand, while the Lord of Ayodhyā was all alone. Finding the gods and sages alarmed, the Lord, who is the Controller of Māyā (~Cosmic Illusion), wrought a great miracle. The demons saw one another in the form of Śrī Rāma, so that the enemy's warriors fought among themselves and perished. (1—4)

दो०—राम राम कहि तनु तजहिं पावहिं पद निर्बान ।
करि उपाय रिपु मारे छन महुँ कृपानिधान ॥ २० (क) ॥
हरषित बरषहिं सुमन सुर बाजहिं गगन निसान ।
अस्तुति करि करि सब चले सोभित बिबिध बिमान ॥ २० (ख) ॥

They quitted their body crying "Rāma! Rāma !!" and thereby attained the state of eternal bliss. Falling back upon this device the Ocean of Mercy killed the enemy in an instant. The gods in their exultation rained down flowers and kettle-drums sounded in the heavens. And hymning their praises one after another they all left, shining in their cars of various patterns. (20 A-B)

चौ०—जब रघुनाथ समर रिपु जीते । सुर नर मुनि सब के भय बीते ॥
तब लछिमन सीतहि लै आए । प्रभु पद परत हरषि उर लाए ॥ १ ॥
सीता चितव स्याम मृदु गाता । परम प्रेम लोचन न अघाता ॥
पंचबटीं बसि श्रीरघुनायक । करत चरित सुर मुनि सुखदायक ॥ २ ॥
धुआँ देखि खरदूषन केरा । जाइ सुपनखाँ रावन प्रेरा ॥
बोली बचन क्रोध करि भारी । देस कोस कै सुरति बिसारी ॥ ३ ॥
करसि पान सोवसि दिनु राती । सुधि नहिं तव सिर पर आराती ॥
राज नीति बिनु धन बिनु धर्मा । हरिहि समर्पे बिनु सतकर्मा ॥ ४ ॥
बिद्या बिनु बिबेक उपजाएँ । श्रम फल पढ़ें किएँ अरु पाएँ ॥
संग तें जती कुमंत्र ते राजा । मान ते ग्यान पान तें लाजा ॥ ५ ॥
प्रीति प्रनय बिनु मद ते गुनी । नासहिं बेगि नीति अस सुनी ॥ ६ ॥

When the Lord of Raghus had vanquished the foe in battle, the gods, human beings and sages were all rid of fear. Then Lakṣmaṇa brought Sītā back; and as he fell at His feet the Lord joyously clasped him to His bosom. Sītā fixed Her gaze on His swarthy and delicate form with utmost affection; but Her eyes knew no satiety. Thus dwelling at Pañchavaṭī the blessed Lord of Raghus performed deeds that delighted gods and sages alike. Perceiving the destruction of Khara and Dūṣaṇa, Śūrpaṇakhā approached Rāvaṇa and instigated him (against Śrī Rāma). In great fury she rated him in the following words: "Discarding all thought of your realm and exchequer you drink and sleep day and night and take no heed of the enemy, who is now at your very door. Sovereignty without political insight, wealth divorced from virtue, noble deeds that have not been offered to Śrī Hari (God) and learning which does not beget wisdom is nothing but fruitless labour to the man who has gained such kingdom or wealth, to the doer of the noble acts and to the student respectively. A recluse is quickly undone by attachment, a king by evil counsel, wisdom by conceit, modesty by drinking, friendship by want of love, and a man of merit by vanity: such is the maxim I have heard. (1—6)

सो०—रिपु रुज पावक पाप प्रभु अहि गनिअ न छोट करि ।
अस कहि बिबिध बिलाप करि लागी रोदन करन ॥ २१ (क) ॥
दो०—सभा माझ परि ब्याकुल बहु प्रकार कह रोइ ।
तोहि जिअत दसकंधर मोरि कि असि गति होइ ॥ २१ (ख) ॥

"An enemy, a malady, fire, sin, a master, and a serpent are never to be accounted trifles." So saying and with profuse laments she set to weeping. In her distress she threw herself down in Rāvaṇa's court and with many a tear said, "Do you think, my ten-headed brother, that I should be reduced to this state even though you are alive?" (21 A-B)

चौ०—सुनत सभासद उठे अकुलाई । समुझाई गहि बाँह उठाई ॥
कह लंकेस कहसि निज बाता । केइँ तव नासा कान निपाता ॥ १ ॥
अवध नृपति दसरथ के जाए । पुरुष सिंह बन खेलन आए ॥
समुझि परी मोहि उन्ह कै करनी । रहित निसाचर करिहहिं धरनी ॥ २ ॥
जिन्ह कर भुजबल पाइ दसानन । अभय भए बिचरत मुनि कानन ॥
देखत बालक काल समाना । परम धीर धन्वी गुन नाना ॥ ३ ॥
अतुलित बल प्रताप द्वौ भ्राता । खल बध रत सुर मुनि सुखदाता ॥
सोभा धाम राम अस नामा । तिन्ह के संग नारि एक स्यामा ॥ ४ ॥
रूप रासि बिधि नारि सँवारी । रति सत कोटि तासु बलिहारी ॥
तासु अनुज काटे श्रुति नासा । सुनि तव भगिनि करहिं परिहासा ॥ ५ ॥
खर दूषन सुनि लगे पुकारा । छन महुँ सकल कटक उन्ह मारा ॥
खर दूषन तिसिरा कर घाता । सुनि दससीस जरे सब गाता ॥ ६ ॥

On hearing this the courtiers rose in great bewilderment; taking her by the arm they lifted her up and comforted her. Said the king of Lankā, "Tell me what has happened to you. Who has struck off your nose and ears?" "Two sons of Daśaratha, the lord of Ayodhyā, who are lions among men, are out for hunting in the woods. The estimate that I have formed of their doing is that they will rid the earth of demons. Relying on the might of their arm, O ten-headed Rāvaṇa, the hermits roam about the woods without fear. Though quite young to look at, they are terrible as Death, the staunchest of archers and accomplished in many ways. Both brothers are unequalled in might and glory; devoted to the extermination of the wicked, they are a source of delight to gods and sages. The elder of the two, who is an abode of beauty, is known by the name of Rāma; he has with him a young belle. The Creator made that woman the very embodiment of loveliness; a hundred million Ratis (consorts of the god of love) are trifles before her. It was his younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) who chopped off my ears and nose and made a mock of me when he heard that I was your sister. When Khara and Dūṣaṇa heard of it, they went to avenge the wrong done to me; but Rāma slew the whole army in a trice!" The ten-headed demon (Rāvaṇa) burned all over (with rage) when he heard of the destruction of Khara, Dūṣaṇa and Triśirā.

(1—6)

दो०—सूपनखहि समुझाइ करि बल बोलेसि बहु भाँति।
गयउ भवन अति सोचबस नीद परइ नहिं राति ॥ २२ ॥

Having consoled Śūrpaṇakhā he boasted of his strength in many ways; but he retired to his palace full of great anxiety and could not sleep the whole night. (22)

चौ०—सुर नर असुर नाग खग माहीं। मोरे अनुचर कहँ कोउ नाहीं॥
खर दूषन मोहि सम बलवंता। तिन्हहि को मारइ बिनु भगवंता॥ १ ॥
सुर रंजन भंजन महि भारा। जौं भगवंत लीन्ह अवतारा॥
तौ मैं जाइ बैरु हठि करऊँ। प्रभु सर प्रान तजें भव तरऊँ॥ २ ॥
होइहि भजनु न तामस देहा। मन क्रम बचन मंत्र दृढ़ एहा॥
जौं नररूप भूपसुत कोऊ। हरिहउँ नारि जीति रन दोऊ॥ ३ ॥
चला अकेल जान चढ़ि तहवाँ। बस मारीच सिंधु तट जहवाँ॥
इहाँ राम जसि जुगुति बनाई। सुनहु उमा सो कथा सुहाई॥ ४ ॥

"Among gods, human beings, demons, Nāgas and birds," he thought, "there is none who can withstand my servants. As for Khara and Dūṣaṇa, they were as powerful as myself; who else could have killed them, had it not been the Lord Himself? If therefore the Lord Himself, the Delighter of the gods and the Reliever of Earth's burden, has appeared on earth, I will go and resolutely fight with Him and cross the ocean of mundane existence by falling to His arrows. Adoration is out of question in this (demoniac) body, which is made up of the principle of ignorance, Tamas. Therefore, such is my firm resolve in thought, word and deed. And if they happen to be some mortal princes I shall conquer them both in battle and carry off the bride." Having thus made up his mind, he mounted his chariot and drove off alone to the spot where Mārīcha was living by the sea-shore. Now, hear, Umā, the delectable account of the device that Śrī Rāma employed. (1—4)

दो०—लछिमन गए बनहिं जब लेन मूल फल कंद।
जनकसुता सन बोले बिहसि कृपा सुख बृंद ॥ २३ ॥

When Lakṣmaṇa had gone to the woods to gather roots, fruits and bulbs, Śrī Rāma, the very incarnation of compassion and joy, spoke with a smile to Janaka's Daughter:— (23)

चौ०—सुनहु प्रिया ब्रत रुचिर सुसीला। मैं कछु करबि ललित नरलीला॥
तुम्ह पावक महुँ करहु निवासा। जौ लगि करौं निसाचर नासा॥ १ ॥
जबहिं राम सब कहा बखानी। प्रभु पद धरि हियँ अनल समानी॥
निज प्रतिबिंब राखि तहँ सीता। तैसइ सील रूप सुबिनीता॥ २ ॥
लछिमनहूँ यह मरमु न जाना। जो कछु चरित रचा भगवाना॥
दसमुख गयउ जहाँ मारीचा। नाइ माथ स्वारथ रत नीचा॥ ३ ॥
नवनि नीच कै अति दुखदाई। जिमि अंकुस धनु उरग बिलाई॥
भयदायक खल कै प्रिय बानी। जिमि अकाल के कुसुम भवानी॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, my darling, who have been staunch in the holy vow of fidelity to me and are so virtuous in conduct: I am going to act a lovely human part. Abide in fire until I have completed the destruction of the demons." No sooner had Śrī Rāma told Her everything in detail than She impressed the image of the Lord's feet on Her heart and entered into the fire, leaving with Him only a shadow of Hers, though precisely of the same appearance and the same amiable and gentle disposition. Lakṣmaṇa too did not know the secret of what the Lord had done behind the curtain. The ten-headed Rāvaṇa approached Mārīcha and bowed his head to him, selfish and vile as he was. The meekness of a mean creature is a source of great trouble like the bending of a goad, bow, snake or cat. The friendly speech of a villain is as dangerous, Bhavānī (Pārvatī), as the flowers that blossom out of season. (1–4)

दो०—करि पूजा मारीच तब सादर पूछी बात ।
कवन हेतु मन व्यग्र अति अकसर आयहु तात ॥ २४ ॥

After doing him homage Mārīcha respectfully enquired of him his errand: "Wherefore, my son, are you so much disturbed in mind that you have come all the way alone ?" (24)

चौ०—दसमुख सकल कथा तेहि आगें । कही सहित अभिमान अभागें ॥
होहु कपट मृग तुम्ह छलकारी । जेहि बिधि हरि आनौं नृपनारी ॥ १ ॥
तेहिं पुनि कहा सुनहु दससीसा । ते नररूप चराचर ईसा ॥
तासों तात बयरु नहिं कीजै । मारें मरिअ जिआएँ जीजै ॥ २ ॥
मुनि मख राखन गयउ कुमारा । बिनु फर सर रघुपति मोहि मारा ॥
सत जोजन आयउँ छन माहीं । तिन्ह सन बयरु किएँ भल नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
भइ मम कीट भृंग की नाई । जहँ तहँ मैं देखउँ दोउ भाई ॥
जौं नर तात तदपि अति सूरा । तिन्हहि बिरोधि न आइहि पूरा ॥ ४ ॥

The wretched Rāvaṇa proudly repeated the whole story to him and added, "Assume the false appearance of a wily deer, so that I may be able to abduct the princess." Mārīcha, however, remonstrated, "Listen, Rāvaṇa: though disguised as a man, He is the lord of the whole animate and inanimate creation. There can be no quarrel with Him, dear son; we die when He would have us die and live only by His sufferance. Those very princes had gone to guard the sacrifice of the sage Viśwāmitra, when Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Raghus) smote me with a pointless arrow, that threw me at a distance of 800 miles in an instant. It will not be good to antagonize them. I find myself reduced to the position of an insect* caught in the nest of a Bhṛnga (a wasp-like winged creature) inasmuch as I behold the two brothers wherever I look. Even if they are human beings, dear son, they are remarkable heroes nonetheless; and opposition to them will not avail. (1–4)

*It is a matter of common observation that the Bhṛnga catches hold of any insect whatsoever and confining it in its nest of mud hums incessantly before it with the result that the insect is enamoured of the Bhṛnga and is eventually transformed into a Bhṛnga.

दो०—जेहिं ताड़का सुबाहु हति खंडेउ हर कोदंड ।
खर दूषन तिसिरा बधेउ मनुज कि अस बरिबंड ॥ २५ ॥

"But can he possibly be a man, who recklessly killed Tāḍakā and Subāhu, broke Śiva's bow and slew Khara, Dūṣaṇa and Triśirā ? (25)

चौ०—जाहु भवन कुल कुसल बिचारी । सुनत जरा दीन्हिसि बहु गारी ॥
गुरु जिमि मूढ़ करसि मम बोधा । कहु जग मोहि समान को जोधा ॥ १ ॥
तब मारीच हृदयँ अनुमाना । नवहि बिरोधें नहिं कल्याना ॥
सस्त्री मर्मी प्रभु सठ धनी । बैद बंदि कबि भानस गुनी ॥ २ ॥
उभय भाँति देखा निज मरना । तब ताकिसि रघुनायक सरना ॥
उतरु देत मोहि बधब अभागें । कस न मरौं रघुपति सर लागें ॥ ३ ॥
अस जियँ जानि दसानन संगा । चला राम पद प्रेम अभंगा ॥
मन अति हरष जनाव न तेही । आजु देखिहउँ परम सनेही ॥ ४ ॥

"Therefore, considering the welfare of your race you had better return home." When he heard this he flared up and showered many abuses on Mārīcha. "You fool, you presume to teach me as if you were my preceptor. Tell me which warrior in this world is a match for me." Then Mārīcha thought to himself, "It does not do one good to make enemies of the following nine, viz., one skilled in the use of a weapon, he who knows one's secret, a powerful master, a dunce, a wealthy man, a physician, a panegyrist, a poet, an expert cook." Either way he saw he must die: hence he sought refuge in the Lord of Raghus. "If I argue further, the wretch would kill me; why, then, should I not be killed by Śrī Rāma's arrows ?" Pondering thus in his mind he accompanied Rāvaṇa, unremitting in his devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet. He felt extremely delighted at the thought that he would be able to behold his greatest friend (Śrī Rāma), even though he would not reveal his joy to Rāvaṇa. (1—4)

छं०—निज परम प्रीतम देखि लोचन सुफल करि सुख पाइहौं ।
श्री सहित अनुज समेत कृपानिकेत पद मन लाइहौं ॥
निर्बान दायक क्रोध जा कर भगति अबसहि बसकरी ।
निज पानि सर संधानि सो मोहि बधिहि सुखसागर हरी ॥

"My eyes will be rewarded when I behold my most beloved lord to my great exultation and I shall fix my thoughts on the feet of the All-merciful accompanied by Sītā and His younger brother. To think that Śrī Hari, the Ocean of Bliss, whose very wrath confers final beatitude and who, though subject to none gives Himself up entirely to the will of His devotees, will fit an arrow with His own hands to His bow and slay me

दो०—मम पाछें धर धावत धरें सरासन बान ।
फिरि फिरि प्रभुहि बिलोकिहउँ धन्य न मो सम आन ॥ २६ ॥

"As He runs after me on foot, carrying His bow and arrow, I shall again and again turn in order to get a sight of my lord! No one else is so blessed as I am." (26)

चौ०—तेहि बन निकट दसानन गयऊ । तब मारीच कपटमृग भयऊ ॥
अति बिचित्र कछु बरनि न जाई । कनक देह मनि रचित बनाई ॥ १ ॥
सीता परम रुचिर मृग देखा । अंग अंग सुमनोहर बेषा ॥
सुनहु देव रघुबीर कृपाला । एहि मृग कर अति सुंदर छाला ॥ २ ॥
सत्यसंध प्रभु बधि करि एही । आनहु चर्म कहति बैदेही ॥
तब रघुपति जानत सब कारन । उठे हरषि सुर काजु सँवारन ॥ ३ ॥
मृग बिलोकि कटि परिकर बाँधा । करतल चाप रुचिर सर साँधा ॥
प्रभु लछिमनहि कहा समुझाई । फिरत बिपिन निसिचर बहु भाई ॥ ४ ॥
सीता केरि करेहु रखवारी । बुधि बिबेक बल समय बिचारी ॥
प्रभुहि बिलोकि चला मृग भाजी । धाए रामु सरासन साजी ॥ ५ ॥
निगम नेति सिव ध्यान न पावा । मायामृग पाछें सो धावा ॥
कबहुँ निकट पुनि दूरि पराई । कबहुँक प्रगटइ कबहुँ छपाई ॥ ६ ॥
प्रगटत दुरत करत छल भूरी । एहि बिधि प्रभुहि गयउ लै दूरी ॥
तब तकि राम कठिन सर मारा । धरनि परेउ करि घोर पुकारा ॥ ७ ॥
लछिमन कर प्रथमहिं लै नामा । पाछें सुमिरेसि मन महुँ रामा ॥
प्रान तजत प्रगटेसि निज देहा । सुमिरेसि रामु समेत सनेहा ॥ ८ ॥
अंतर प्रेम तासु पहिचाना । मुनि दुर्लभ गति दीन्हि सुजाना ॥ ९ ॥

When the ten-headed Rāvaṇa drew near to the forest (in which Śrī Rāma had taken up His abode), Mārīcha assumed the false appearance of a deer, so very wonderful as to defy description, with a body of gold artistically inlaid with jewels. When Sītā saw the exquisitely beautiful creature, most lovely in every limb, She said, "Listen, my gracious Lord Śrī Rāma (Hero of Raghu's line), this deer has a most charming skin. Pray kill this animal, my lord, and get me the hide, true as you are to your word." Thereupon the Lord of Raghus, even though He knew all the circumstances (that had led Mārīcha to assume the semblance of a deer) arose with joy to accomplish the object of the gods. Casting a look at the deer He girded up His loins with a piece of cloth and aking the bow in His hand fitted a shining arrow to the same. The Lord cautioned Lakṣmaṇa: "A host of demons, brother, roam about in the woods. Take care of Sītā with due regard to your strength and circumstances and making use of your intellect and discretion." The deer took to flight at the sight of the Lord and Śrī Rāma ran after it pulling His bow-string. How strange that He whom the Vedas describe in negative terms such as 'not that' and whom Śiva is unable to catch hold of even in meditation, ran in pursuit of a false deer! Now close at hand, the very next moment it ran away to some distance; at one time it came into view, at another it went out of sight. Thus alternately revealing and concealing itself and practising every kind of wile, it took the Lord far away. Now Śrī Rāma took a steady aim and let fly the fatal shaft, when

the animal fell to the ground with a fearful cry, first calling aloud to Lakṣmaṇa but afterwards mentally invoking Śrī Rāma. While giving up the ghost it manifested its real form and lovingly remembered Śrī Rāma. The omniscient Lord, who could see the love of his heart, conferred on him the state which cannot be easily attained to even by the sages. (1—9)

दो०—बिपुल सुमन सुर बरषहिं गावहिं प्रभु गुन गाथ।
निज पद दीन्ह असुर कहुँ दीनबंधु रघुनाथ ॥ २७ ॥

The gods rained down flowers in abundance and sang praises of the Lord: "The Lord of Raghus is such a friend of the humble that He conferred His own state (divinity) on a demon." (27)

चौ०—खल बधि तुरत फिरे रघुबीरा। सोह चाप कर कटि तूनीरा ॥
आरत गिरा सुनी जब सीता। कह लछिमन सन परम सभीता ॥ १ ॥
जाहु बेगि संकट अति भ्राता। लछिमन बिहसि कहा सुनु माता ॥
भृकुटि बिलास सृष्टि लय होई। सपनेहुँ संकट परइ कि सोई ॥ २ ॥
मरम बचन जब सीता बोला। हरि प्रेरित लछिमन मन डोला ॥
बन दिसि देव सौंपि सब काहू। चले जहाँ रावन ससि राहू ॥ ३ ॥
सून बीच दसकंधर देखा। आवा निकट जती कें बेषा ॥
जाकें डर सुर असुर डेराहीं। निसि न नीद दिन अन्न न खाहीं ॥ ४ ॥
सो दससीस स्वान की नाईं। इत उत चितइ चला भड़िहाईं ॥
इमि कुपंथ पग देत खगेसा। रह न तेज तन बुधि बल लेसा ॥ ५ ॥
नाना बिधि करि कथा सुहाई। राजनीति भय प्रीति देखाई ॥
कह सीता सुनु जती गोसाईं। बोलेहु बचन दुष्ट की नाईं ॥ ६ ॥
तब रावन निज रूप देखावा। भई सभय जब नाम सुनावा ॥
कह सीता धरि धीरजु गाढ़ा। आइ गयउ प्रभु रहु खल ठाढ़ा ॥ ७ ॥
जिमि हरिबधुहि छुद्र सस चाहा। भएसि कालबस निसिचर नाहा ॥
सुनत बचन दससीस रिसाना। मन महुँ चरन बंदि सुख माना ॥ ८ ॥

As soon as He had slain the wretch the Hero of Raghu's line turned back, the charming bow in his hand and the quiver at His waist. When Sītā heard the cry of distress, She was seized with excessive fear and said to Lakṣmaṇa, "Go quickly, your brother is in great peril." Lakṣmaṇa answered with a smile, "Listen, mother: By the very play of Śrī Rāma's eyebrows the entire creation is annihilated; could He then ever dream of being in danger ?" But when Sītā urged him with words that cut him to the quick, Lakṣmaṇa's resolution—for such was Śrī Hari's will—was shaken. He entrusted Her to the care of all the sylvan gods and the deities presiding over the quarters and proceeded to the place where Śrī Rāma, a veritable Rāhu to the moonlike Rāvana, was. Availing himself of this opportunity, when there was none by the side of Sītā, the ten-headed Rāvana drew near to Her cottage in the guise of a recluse. He, in fear of whom the gods and demons equally trembled, so much

so that they could neither sleep by night nor eat their food by- day,—that very Rāvaṇa proceeded on his mission of thieving looking this side and that like a cur. Even so the moment a man sets his foot on the path of vice, O Garuḍa (king of birds), his bodily glow, reason and strength completely disappear. Having invented alluring stories of various kinds he not only showed Her the course which was dictated by political wisdom but also used threats and made love to Her. Said Sītā, "Listen, O holy father: you have spoken like a villain." Then Rāvaṇa revealed his real form; and She was terrified when he mentioned his name. Sītā plucked all Her courage and said, "Stay awhile, O wretch; my lord has come. Even as a tiny hare would wed a lioness, so have you wooed your own destruction (by setting your heart on me), O king of demons." On hearing these words the ten-headed Rāvaṇa flew into a rage, though in his heart he rejoiced to adore Her feet. (1—8)

दो०—क्रोधवंत तब रावन लीन्हिसि रथ बैठाइ ।
चला गगनपथ आतुर भयँ रथ हाँकि न जाइ ॥ २८ ॥

Full of rage, Rāvaṇa now seated Her in his chariot and drove through the air in great flurry: he was so much afraid that he was scarcely able to drive. (28)

चौ०—हा जग एक बीर रघुराया । केहिं अपराध बिसारेहु दाया ॥
आरति हरन सरन सुखदायक । हा रघुकुल सरोज दिननायक ॥ १ ॥
हा लछिमन तुम्हार नहिं दोसा । सो फलु पायउँ कीन्हेउँ रोसा ॥
बिबिध बिलाप करति बैदेही । भूरि कृपा प्रभु दूरि सनेही ॥ २ ॥
बिपति मोरि को प्रभुहि सुनावा । पुरोडास चह रासभ खावा ॥
सीता कै बिलाप सुनि भारी । भए चराचर जीव दुखारी ॥ ३ ॥
गीधराज सुनि आरत बानी । रघुकुलतिलक नारि पहिचानी ॥
अधम निसाचर लीन्हें जाई । जिमि मलेछ बस कपिला गाई ॥ ४ ॥
सीते पुत्रि करसि जनि त्रासा । करिहउँ जातुधान कर नासा ॥
धावा क्रोधवंत खग कैसें । छूटइ पबि परबत कहुँ जैसें ॥ ५ ॥
रे रे दुष्ट ठाढ़ किन होही । निर्भय चलेसि न जानेहि मोही ॥
आवत देखि कृतांत समाना । फिरि दसकंधर कर अनुमाना ॥ ६ ॥
की मैनाक कि खगपति होई । मम बल जान सहित पति सोई ॥
जाना जरठ जटायू एहा । मम कर तीरथ छाँड़िहि देहा ॥ ७ ॥
सुनत गीध क्रोधातुर धावा । कह सुनु रावन मोर सिखावा ॥
तजि जानकिहि कुसल गृह जाहू । नाहिं त अस होइहि बहुबाहू ॥ ८ ॥
राम रोष पावक अति घोरा । होइहि सकल सलभ कुल तोरा ॥
उतरु न देत दसानन जोधा । तबहिं गीध धावा करि क्रोधा ॥ ९ ॥
धरि कच बिरथ कीन्ह महि गिरा । सीतहि राखि गीध पुनि फिरा ॥
चोचन्ह मारि बिदारेसि देही । दंड एक भइ मुरुछा तेही ॥ १० ॥

तब सक्रोध निसिचर खिसिआना। काढ़ेसि परम कराल कृपाना॥
काटेसि पंख परा खग धरनी। सुमिरि राम करि अद्भुत करनी॥ ११॥
सीतहि जान चढ़ाइ बहोरी। चला उताइल त्रास न थोरी॥
करति बिलाप जाति नभ सीता। ब्याध बिबस जनु मृगी सभीता॥ १२॥
गिरि पर बैठे कपिन्ह निहारी। कहि हरि नाम दीन्ह पट डारी॥
एहि बिधि सीतहि सो लै गयऊ। बन असोक महँ राखत भयऊ॥ १३॥

"Ah ! Lord of Raghus, peerless champion of the world, reliever of distress and delighter of the suppliant, ah ! the sun that gladdens the lotus-like race of Raghu, for what fault of mine have you become so hard-hearted against your nature ? Ah ! Lakṣmaṇa, the fault is none of yours; I have reaped the fruit of the temper I showed." Manifold were the lamentations that Videha's Daughter uttered. "Though boundless his mercy, my loving lord is far away. Who will apprize the lord of my calamity ? An ass would eat the sacrificial oblation !" At the sound of Sītā's loud wailing all created beings, whether animate or inanimate, felt distressed. Jaṭāyu (the king of vultures) heard the piteous cry and recognized (from Her voice) that it was the spouse of Śrī Rāma, the Glory of Raghu's race, who was being carried away by the vile demon (Rāvaṇa) like a dun cow that had fallen into the hands of some barbarian. "Sītā, my daughter, fear not; I will kill this demon." The bird darted off in its fury like a thunderbolt hurled against a mountain. "Why do you not stop, O villain ? You are proceeding fearlessly as if you have not yet known me !" When he saw the vulture bearing down upon him like Death, the ten-headed monster turned towards him and reflected, "Is it Mount Maināka or can it be Garuḍa (the king of birds) ? The latter, however, knows my strength as also his lord (Bhagavān Viṣṇu) !" When the bird drew near, he recognized it and said, "It is no other than the aged Jaṭāyu; he has come to drop his body at the sanctuary of my hands." At this the vulture rushed in the excitement of his fury, exclaiming: "Listen, Rāvaṇa, to my advice and return home safely, letting Janaka's Daughter alone. Otherwise despite your many arms what will happen is this: in the most terrible flame of Śrī Rāma's wrath your whole house will be consumed like a moth." Bellicose Rāvaṇa, however gave no answer. The vulture (Jaṭāyu) thereupon rushed wildly on and clutching the demon by his hair pulled him from the chariot so that he fell to the ground. Having placed Sītā in a safe retreat, the vulture turned once more towards Rāvaṇa and striking him with his beak tore his body. For nearly half an hour Rāvaṇa lay unconscious. Much annoyed at this the demon now angrily drew his most dreadful sword and cut off Jaṭāyu's wings. Invoking Śrī Rāma and having accomplished marvellous feats, the bird fell to the ground. Rāvaṇa took Sītā once more into his car and drove off in haste, greatly alarmed. Sītā was borne through the air lamenting like a frightened doe caught in the trap of a hunter. Perceiving some monkeys perched on a hill She dropped some cloth uttering Śrī Hari's name. In this manner Rāvaṇa took Sītā away and kept Her in the Aśoka garden. (1—13)

दो०—हारि परा खल बहु बिधि भय अरु प्रीति देखाइ।
तब असोक पादप तर राखिसि जतन कराइ॥ २९ (क)॥

The wretch tried every kind of threat and endearment but failed miserably. At last he kept Her under an Aśoka tree strongly guarded. (29 A)

[PAUSE 6 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

जेहि बिधि कपट कुरंग सँग धाइ चले श्रीराम ।
सो छबि सीता राखि उर रटति रहति हरिनाम ॥ २९ (ख) ॥

Having impressed on Her heart the beautiful image of Śrī Rāma as He appeared while running in pursuit of the false deer, Sītā incessantly repeated Śrī Hari's Name. (29 B)

चौ०—रघुपति अनुजहि आवत देखी । बाहिज चिंता कीन्हि बिसेषी ॥
जनकसुता परिहरिहु अकेली । आयहु तात बचन मम पेली ॥ १ ॥
निसिचर निकर फिरहिं बन माहीं । मम मन सीता आश्रम नाहीं ॥
गहि पद कमल अनुज कर जोरी । कहेउ नाथ कछु मोहि न खोरी ॥ २ ॥
अनुज समेत गए प्रभु तहवाँ । गोदावरि तट आश्रम जहवाँ ॥
आश्रम देखि जानकी हीना । भए बिकल जस प्राकृत दीना ॥ ३ ॥
हा गुन खानि जानकी सीता । रूप सील ब्रत नेम पुनीता ॥
लछिमन समुझाए बहु भाँती । पूछत चले लता तरु पाँती ॥ ४ ॥
हे खग मृग हे मधुकर श्रेनी । तुम्ह देखी सीता मृगनैनी ॥
खंजन सुक कपोत मृग मीना । मधुप निकर कोकिला प्रबीना ॥ ५ ॥
कुंद कली दाड़िम दामिनी । कमल सरद ससि अहिभामिनी ॥
बरुन पास मनोज धनु हंसा । गज केहरि निज सुनत प्रसंसा ॥ ६ ॥
श्रीफल कनक कदलि हरषाहीं । नेकु न संक सकुच मन माहीं ॥
सुनु जानकी तोहि बिनु आजू । हरषे सकल पाइ जनु राजू ॥ ७ ॥
किमि सहि जात अनख तोहि पाहीं । प्रिया बेगि प्रगटसि कस नाहीं ॥
एहि बिधि खोजत बिलपत स्वामी । मनहुँ महा बिरही अति कामी ॥ ८ ॥
पूरनकाम राम सुख रासी । मनुजचरित कर अज अबिनासी ॥
आगें परा गीधपति देखा । सुमिरत राम चरन जिन्ह रेखा ॥ ९ ॥

When the Lord of Raghus saw His younger brother coming, He outwardly expressed much concern. "Alas ! You have left Janaka's daughter alone and come here against my instructions. Hosts of demons are roaming about in the forest; I, therefore, suspect Sītā is not at the hermitage." Laksmana clasped Śrī Rāma's lotus feet and replied with joined palms, "Lord, it is no fault of mine." Accompanied by His younger brother, the Lord went back to His hermitage on the bank of the Godāvarī. When He saw the hermitage bereft of Janaka's Daughter, He felt as perturbed and afflicted as any common man. "Alas ! Sītā, Janaka's daughter, the very mine of virtues, of such flawless beauty, character, austerity and devotion !" Laksmana consoled Him in many ways. He questioned all the creepers and trees (that

stood on the way) as He went along (in search of Her): "O birds and deer, O string of bees, have you seen the fawn-eyed Sītā? The wagtail, the parrot, the pigeon, the deer, the fish, the swarms of bees, the clever cuckoo, the jasmine buds, the pomegranate, the lightning, the lotus, the autumnal moon, the gliding serpent, the noose of Varuṇa (the god of water), the bow of Cupid, the swan, the elephant and the lion now hear themselves praised. The Bilva fruit and the gold banana rejoice and do not feel the least misgiving or bashfulness*. Listen, Janaka's daughter: in your absence today they are all glad as if they have got a kingdom. How can you bear such rivalry? Why do you not reveal yourself quickly, my darling?" In this way the Lord searched and lamented like an uxorious husband sore smitten with pangs of separation. Śrī Rāma, who is Bliss personified and has all His wishes accomplished, and who is both unborn and immortal, behaved like a mortal. Further on they saw the king of vultures lying, with his thoughts fixed on Śrī Rāma's feet, which bear characteristic marks on their soles.† (1—9)

---

* Śrī Rāma here well-nigh exhausts the list of birds and beasts as well as of inanimate objects to which Indian poets usually liken the limbs of a charming lady. Of these the eyes are compared to the fish and the wagtail as well as to the eyes of a fawn, the nose to the parrot's beak, the neck to that of the pigeon, the curly hair to a swarm of bees, the voice to the notes of a cuckoo, the teeth to the jasmine buds and the seeds of the pomegranate, the complexion to the lightning, the eyes and the face as well as the hands and feet to the lotus, the face to the autumnal moon, the braid of hair hanging on the back to a gliding serpent, the smile to the noose of Varuṇa, the eyebrows to Cupid's bow, the gait to that of the swan and the elephant, the waist to that of the lion, the breasts to the Bilva fruit and the thigh to the gold banana. The idea here is that though models of beauty so far as earthly women are concerned, none of these analogues stood comparison with Sītā's limbs and hence they dared not face the latter out of shame. Now that Sītā was no more to be seen, they all regained their supremacy and exulted over their good fortune.

† The scriptures mention 48 marks on the soles of the Lord's feet, 24 on each. Those on the left are: (1) a vertical line (Ūrdhvarekhā), (2) a Swastika, (3) an Aṣṭakoṇa (a figure consisting of a pair of squares intersecting each other), (4) Goddess Lakṣmī (represented by a golden coil describing two and a half concentric circles), (5) a plough, (6) a pestle, (7) a figure of Śeṣa (the serpent-god), (8) an arrow, (9) the sky (represented by a cipher), (10) a lotus, (11) a chariot, (12) a thunderbolt, (13) a grain of barley, (14) the wish-yielding tree in heaven, (15) a goad, (16) a flag, (17) a crown, (18) the discus (Sudarśana), (19) a throne, (20) the staff of Yama (the god of death), (21) a chowrie, (22) an umbrella, (23) a human figure and (24) a wreath of victory (placed by a bride round the neck of the suitor of her choice); while those borne on the right sole are: (1) the river Sarayū, (2) a cow's hoof, (3) the earth, (4) a pitcher, (5) a small flag, (6) A Jambū fruit (the black plum), (7) the crescent, (8) a conchshell, (9) a Ṣaṭkoṇa (a figure consisting of a pair of triangles intersecting each other), (10) a triangle, (11) a mace, (12) a Jīva or the individual soul (represented by a point illustrating its atomic size), (13) Vindu (a point) and (14) Śakti (represented by a semi-circle and forming the base of the Vindu), (15) a reservoir of nectar, (16) three horizontal lines like the folds of the belly, (17) a fish, (18) the full-moon, (19) a lute, (20) a flute, (21) a bow, (22) a quiver, (23) a swan and (24) an ornament for the head of a lady. It should be remembered here that Sri Sītā also bears the same marks in Her soles, with this difference that the marks on Śrī Rāma's right sole are borne by Sītā on Her left and *vice versa*.

दो०—कर सरोज सिर परसेउ कृपासिंधु रघुबीर ।
निरखि राम छबि धाम मुख बिगत भई सब पीर ॥ ३० ॥

The Hero of Raghu's line, the ocean of mercy, stroked Jaṭāyu's head with His lotus hands. As the bird gazed on Śrī Rāma's countenance, the home of loveliness, all his pain disappeared. (30)

चौ०—तब कह गीध बचन धरि धीरा । सुनहु राम भंजन भव भीरा ॥
नाथ दसानन यह गति कीन्ही । तेहिं खल जनकसुता हरि लीन्ही ॥ १ ॥
लै दच्छिन दिसि गयउ गोसाईं । बिलपति अति कुररी की नाईं ॥
दरस लागि प्रभु राखेउँ प्राना । चलन चहत अब कृपानिधाना ॥ २ ॥
राम कहा तनु राखहु ताता । मुख मुसुकाइ कही तेहिं बाता ॥
जा कर नाम मरत मुख आवा । अधमउ मुकुत होइ श्रुति गावा ॥ ३ ॥
सो मम लोचन गोचर आगें । राखौं देह नाथ केहि खाँगें ॥
जल भरि नयन कहहिं रघुराई । तात कर्म निज तें गति पाई ॥ ४ ॥
परहित बस जिन्ह के मन माहीं । तिन्ह कहुँ जग दुर्लभ कछु नाहीं ॥
तनु तजि तात जाहु मम धामा । देउँ काह तुम्ह पूरनकामा ॥ ५ ॥

The vulture now recovered himself and spoke as follows: "Listen, Rāma, the allayer of the fear of transmigration: it was the ten-headed Rāvaṇa, my lord, who reduced me to this plight; it was the same wretch who carried off Janaka's daughter. He took her away, holy sir, to the south while she kept screaming loudly as an osprey. I have survived, my lord, only to behold You; my life now is about to depart, O fountain of mercy." Said Śrī Rāma, "Live yet more, father." He, however, replied with a smile on his countenance, "He whose very name, so declare the Vedas, redeems the most depraved soul even if it appears on his lips at the moment of his death, is present before me in a visible form ! What more is wanting now, for which I should retain my body any longer ?" With His eyes full of tears the Lord of Raghus replied, "Dear father, you have attained to an enviable state by virtue of your own noble deeds. Nothing is difficult of attainment in this world to those who have others' interests at heart. Casting off your body, dear father, proceed now to My divine abode. What shall I give you, when you have all your desires already accomplished ? (1—5)

दो०—सीता हरन तात जनि कहहु पिता सन जाइ ।
जौं मैं राम त कुल सहित कहिहि दसानन आइ ॥ ३१ ॥

"But on reaching there, sire, tell not my father about Sītā's abduction. If I am no other than Rāma (if I am what I am), the ten-headed Rāvaṇa and his whole house will go and say everything to him." (31)

चौ०—गीध देह तजि धरि हरि रूपा । भूषन बहु पट पीत अनूपा ॥
स्याम गात बिसाल भुज चारी । अस्तुति करत नयन भरि बारी ॥ १ ॥

The vulture now dropped his body and assumed Śrī Hari's own form, bedecked with many jewels and clad in a yellow attire of matchless splendour, and possessed of a dark hue and four long arms; and with his eyes full of tears he burst into praises of his lord. (1)

छं०—जय राम रूप अनूप निर्गुन सगुन गुन प्रेरक सही ।
दससीस बाहु प्रचंड खंडन चंड सर मंडन मही ॥
पाथोद गात सरोज मुख राजीव आयत लोचनं ।
नित नौमि रामु कृपाल बाहु बिसाल भव भय मोचनं ॥ १ ॥
बलमप्रमेयमनादिमजमब्यक्तमेकमगोचरं ।
गोबिंद गोपर द्वंद्वहर बिग्यानघन धरनीधरं ॥
जे राम मंत्र जपंत संत अनंत जन मन रंजनं ।
नित नौमि राम अकाम प्रिय कामादि खल दल गंजनं ॥ २ ॥
जेहि श्रुति निरंजन ब्रह्म ब्यापक बिरज अज कहि गावहीं ।
करि ध्यान ग्यान बिराग जोग अनेक मुनि जेहि पावहीं ॥
सो प्रगट करुना कंद सोभा बृंद अग जग मोहई ।
मम हृदय पंकज भृंग अंग अनंग बहु छबि सोहई ॥ ३ ॥
जो अगम सुगम सुभाव निर्मल असम सम सीतल सदा ।
पस्यंति जं जोगी जतन करि करत मन गो बस सदा ॥
सो राम रमा निवास संतत दास बस त्रिभुवन धनी ।
मम उर बसउ सो समन संसृति जासु कीरति पावनी ॥ ४ ॥

"Glory to Śrī Rāma of incomparable beauty, who is absolute as well as qualified and the true impeller of Guṇas (Māyā) too. His fierce arrows are potent enough to cut off the terrible arms of the ten-headed Rāvaṇa. I incessantly adore the all-merciful Śrī Rāma, the ornament of the earth, who is endowed with a form dark as the rain-cloud, a face resembling the blue lotus and large eyes resembling the red lotus. Possessed of long arms, He rids His devotees of the fear of transmigration. His strength is immeasurable; He is without beginning and unborn, the one (without a second), unmanifest and imperceptible, beyond the reach of the senses, though attainable with the help of the Vedic hymns, the dispeller of pairs of opposites (such as joy and sorrow, birth and death, pleasure and pain etc.), consciousness personified, the supporter of the earth and the delighter of the soul of countless saints and devotees who repeat the sacred Name of Rāma. I ever extol Śrī Rāma, who loves and is loved by those who are free from desire and curbs the host of vicious propensities such as lust and so on. He, whom the Vedas glorify under the name of Brahma, pure (free from the taint of Māyā), all-pervading, passionless and unborn, whom the sages attain to through manifold practices such as meditation, discretion, dispassion and Yoga (self-discipline), that fountain of mercy has become manifest as the very incarnation of beauty and enraptures the whole animate and inanimate creation. He is

the bee that resides in the lotus of my heart and through every limb of His shines the splendour of many a god of love. He, who is at once inaccessible and easily accessible, who has a guileless disposition and is both partial and impartial and ever placid, whom the Yogīs perceive with great effort subduing their senses and mind, that Rāma, the abode of Ramā (Goddess Lakṣmī) and the Lord of the three spheres (the entire creation) is ever at the beck and call of His devotees. May He abide in my heart, whose holy praises put a stop to transmigration.'' (1—4)

दो०—अबिरल भगति मागि बर गीध गयउ हरिधाम ।
तेहि की क्रिया जथोचित निज कर कीन्ही राम ॥ ३२ ॥

Asking the boon of uninterrupted devotion the vulture (Jaṭāyu) ascended to Śrī Hari's Abode. Śrī Rāma performed his funeral rites with due ceremony and with His own hands. (32)

चौ०—कोमल चित अति दीनदयाला । कारन बिनु रघुनाथ कृपाला ॥
गीध अधम खग आमिष भोगी । गति दीन्ही जो जाचत जोगी ॥ १ ॥
सुनहु उमा ते लोग अभागी । हरि तजि होहिं बिषय अनुरागी ॥
पुनि सीतहि खोजत द्वौ भाई । चले बिलोकत बन बहुताई ॥ २ ॥
संकुल लता बिटप घन कानन । बहु खग मृग तहँ गज पंचानन ॥
आवत पंथ कबंध निपाता । तेहिं सब कही साप कै बाता ॥ ३ ॥
दुरबासा मोहि दीन्ही सापा । प्रभु पद पेखि मिटा सो पापा ॥
सुनु गंधर्ब कहउँ मैं तोही । मोहि न सोहाइ ब्रह्मकुल द्रोही ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord of Raghus is most tender-hearted and compassionate to the humble and shows His mercy even where there is no occasion for it. On a vulture, who is a most unclean and carnivorous bird, He conferred a state which is solicited even by Yogīs. Listen, Umā: those people are unfortunate indeed, who abandon Śrī Hari and become attached to the objects of sense. The two brothers proceeded further in quest of Sītā and marked the thickening of the forest even as they went. The thicket was full of creepers and trees and inhabited by many birds and deer, elephants and lions. Śrī Rāma overthrew the demon Kabandha even as the latter met Him on the way; he told Him the whole story about the curse pronounced on him: "The sage Durvāsā had imprecated me; the sin has now been wiped out by the sight of the Lord's feet.'' "Listen, O Gandharva, to what I tell you: I cannot tolerate an enemy of the Brahmans. (1—4)

दो०—मन क्रम बचन कपट तजि जो कर भूसुर सेव ।
मोहि समेत बिरंचि सिव बस ताकें सब देव ॥ ३३ ॥

"He who without guile in thought, word and deed does service to the Brahmans (the very gods on earth), wins over Brahmā, Śiva, Myself and all other divinities. (33)

चौ०—सापत ताड़त परुष कहंता । बिप्र पूज्य अस गावहिं संता ॥
पूजिअ बिप्र सील गुन हीना । सूद्र न गुन गन ग्यान प्रबीना ॥ १ ॥

कहि निज धर्म ताहि समुझावा । निज पद प्रीति देखि मन भावा ॥
रघुपति चरन कमल सिरु नाई । गयउ गगन आपनि गति पाई ॥ २ ॥
ताहि देइ गति राम उदारा । सबरी कें आश्रम पगु धारा ॥
सबरी देखि राम गृहँ आए । मुनि के बचन समुझि जियँ भाए ॥ ३ ॥
सरसिज लोचन बाहु बिसाला । जटा मुकुट सिर उर बनमाला ॥
स्याम गौर सुंदर दोउ भाई । सबरी परी चरन लपटाई ॥ ४ ॥
प्रेम मगन मुख बचन न आवा । पुनि पुनि पद सरोज सिर नावा ॥
सादर जल लै चरन पखारे । पुनि सुंदर आसन बैठारे ॥ ५ ॥

"A Brahman, even though he curse you, beat you or speak harsh words to you, is still worthy of adoration: so declare the saints. A Brahman must be respected, though lacking in amiability and virtue; not so a Śūdra, though possessing a host of virtues and rich in knowledge." The Lord instructed Kabandha in His own cult (the cult of Devotion) and was delighted at heart to see his devotion to His feet. Having regained his original form (that of a Gandharva) he bowed his head to the lotus feet of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Raghus) and ascended to the heaven. Having conferred on him his own (Gandharva) state the beneficent Rāma repaired to the hermitage of Śabarī*. When Śabarī saw that Śrī Rāma had called at her abode, she recalled the words of the sage (Matanga)† and was glad of heart. With lotus-like eyes, long arms, a tuft of matted hair adorning their head like a crown and a garland of wild flowers hanging upon their breast, the two brothers looked most charming—the one dark of hue and the other fair; Śabarī fell prostrate and embraced their feet. She was so overwhelmed with love that no words came to her lips. Again and again she bowed her head at their lotus feet. Presently she took some water and reverently laved their feet and then conducted them to a seat of honour. (1—5)

दो०—कंद मूल फल सुरस अति दिए राम कहुँ आनि ।
प्रेम सहित प्रभु खाए बारंबार बखानि ॥ ३४ ॥

She brought and offered to Śrī Rāma the most delicious bulbs, roots and fruits. The Lord partook of them praising them again and again. (34)

चौ०—पानि जोरि आगें भइ ठाढ़ी । प्रभुहि बिलोकि प्रीति अति बाढ़ी ॥
केहि बिधि अस्तुति करौं तुम्हारी । अधम जाति मैं जड़मति भारी ॥ १ ॥

* Śabarī was known by the name of the wild tribe (Śabaras) to which she belonged. Though low-born, she had already acquired some celebrity for her piety and devotion; hence the poet has chosen to call her abode a hermitage (a name generally applied to the abode of sages and hermits). This can easily serve as an illustration of the catholicity of the great Hindu religion, which, though rigid in social matters, does not fail to give proper recognition to individual merit and virtue. The whole of this episode is a great eye-opener in this respect.

† From other sources it can be gathered that the sage, who was Śabarī's own Guru, had predicted to her, on the eve of his demise long before, that the Lord would visit her. It is this prediction of the sage that has been referred to above.

अधम ते अधम अधम अति नारी । तिन्ह महँ मैं मतिमंद अघारी ॥
कह रघुपति सुनु भामिनि बाता । मानउँ एक भगति कर नाता ॥ २ ॥
जाति पाँति कुल धर्म बड़ाई । धन बल परिजन गुन चतुराई ॥
भगति हीन नर सोहइ कैसा । बिनु जल बारिद देखिअ जैसा ॥ ३ ॥
नवधा भगति कहउँ तोहि पाहीं । सावधान सुनु धरु मन माहीं ॥
प्रथम भगति संतन्ह कर संगा । दूसरि रति मम कथा प्रसंगा ॥ ४ ॥

Joining her palms she stood before Him; as she gazed upon the Lord her love waxed yet more ardent. "How can I extol You, lowest in descent and the dullest of wit as I am ? A woman is the lowest of those who rank as the lowest of the low. Of women again I am the most dull-headed, O Destroyer of sins." Answered the Lord of Raghus: "Listen, O good lady, to My words. I recognize no other kinship except that of Devotion. Despite caste, kinship, lineage, piety, reputation, wealth, physical strength, numerical strength of his family, accomplishments and ability, a man lacking in Devotion is of no more worth than a cloud without water. Now I tell you the nine forms of Devotion; please listen attentively and cherish them in your mind. The first in order is fellowship with the saints and the second is marked by a fondness for My stories. (1—4)

दो०—गुर पद पंकज सेवा तीसरि भगति अमान ।
चौथि भगति मम गुन गन करइ कपट तजि गान ॥ ३५ ॥

"Humble service of the lotus feet of one's preceptor is the third form of Devotion, while the fourth type of Devotion consists in singing My praises with a guileless purpose. (35)

चौ०—मंत्र जाप मम दृढ़ बिस्वासा । पंचम भजन सो बेद प्रकासा ॥
छठ दम सील बिरति बहु करमा । निरत निरंतर सज्जन धरमा ॥ १ ॥
सातवँ सम मोहि मय जग देखा । मोतें संत अधिक करि लेखा ॥
आठवँ जथालाभ संतोषा । सपनेहुँ नहिं देखइ परदोषा ॥ २ ॥
नवम सरल सब सन छलहीना । मम भरोस हियँ हरष न दीना ॥
नव महुँ एकउ जिन्ह कें होई । नारि पुरुष सचराचर कोई ॥ ३ ॥
सोइ अतिसय प्रिय भामिनि मोरें । सकल प्रकार भगति दृढ़ तोरें ॥
जोगि बृंद दुरलभ गति जोई । तो कहुँ आजु सुलभ भइ सोई ॥ ४ ॥
मम दरसन फल परम अनूपा । जीव पाव निज सहज सरूपा ॥
जनकसुता कइ सुधि भामिनी । जानहि कहु करिबरगामिनी ॥ ५ ॥
पंपा सरहि जाहु रघुराई । तहँ होइहि सुग्रीव मिताई ॥
सो सब कहिहि देव रघुबीरा । जानतहूँ पूछहु मतिधीरा ॥ ६ ॥
बार बार प्रभु पद सिरु नाई । प्रेम सहित सब कथा सुनाई ॥ ७ ॥

"Muttering My Name with unwavering faith constitutes the fifth form of adoration revealed in the Vedas. The sixth variety consists in the

practice of self-control and virtue, desisting from manifold activities and ever pursuing the course of conduct prescribed for saints. He who practises the seventh type sees the world full of Me without distinction and reckons the saints as even greater than Myself. He who cultivates the eighth type of Devotion remains contented with whatever he gets and never thinks of detecting others' faults. The ninth form of Devotion demands that one should be guileless and straight in one's dealings with everybody, and should in his heart cherish implicit faith in Me without either exultation or depression. Whoever possesses any one of these nine forms of Devotion, be he man or woman or any other creature—sentient or insentient—is most dear to Me, O good lady. As for yourself, you are blessed with unflinching devotion of all these types. The prize which is hardly won by the Yogīs is within your easy reach today. The most incomparable fruit of seeing Me is that the soul attains its natural state. If you know anything about Janaka's daughter, My good lady, tell Me her news, O fair dame." "Go to the Pampā lake, O Lord of Raghus; there You will make friends with Sugrīva. He will tell You everything, my Lord Rāma, Hero of Raghu's line; You are of steady resolve and know everything; nevertheless You ask me!" Bowing her head at the Lord's feet again and again she lovingly related the whole story (of what the sage Matanga had told her and how eagerly she had watched His approach all the time). (1—7)

छं०—कहि कथा सकल बिलोकि हरि मुख हृदयँ पद पंकज धरे ।
तजि जोग पावक देह हरि पद लीन भइ जहँ नहिं फिरे ॥
नर बिबिध कर्म अधर्म बहु मत सोकप्रद सब त्यागहू ।
बिस्वास करि कह दास तुलसी राम पद अनुरागहू ॥

After telling the whole story she gazed on the Lord's countenance and imprinted the image of His lotus feet on her heart; and casting her body in the fire of Yoga she entered Śrī Hari's state wherefrom there is no return. "O men, abandon your varied activities, sins and diverse creeds, which all give birth to sorrow, and with genuine faith," says Tulasīdāsa, "be devoted to the feet of Śrī Rāma."

दो०—जाति हीन अघ जन्म महि मुक्त कीन्हि असि नारि ।
महामंद मन सुख चहसि ऐसे प्रभुहि बिसारि ॥ ३६ ॥

The Lord conferred final beatitude even on a woman who was not only an outcaste but a very mine of sin; you seek happiness, my most foolish mind, by forgetting such a master! (36)

चौ०—चले राम त्यागा बन सोऊ । अतुलित बल नर केहरि दोऊ ॥
बिरही इव प्रभु करत बिषादा । कहत कथा अनेक संबादा ॥ १ ॥
लछिमन देखु बिपिन कइ सोभा । देखत केहि कर मन नहिं छोभा ॥
नारि सहित सब खग मृग बृंदा । मानहुँ मोरि करत हहिं निंदा ॥ २ ॥
हमहि देखि मृग निकर पराहीं । मृगीं कहहिं तुम्ह कहँ भय नाहीं ॥
तुम्ह आनंद करहु मृग जाए । कंचन मृग खोजन ए आए ॥ ३ ॥

संग लाइ करिनीं करि लेहीं । मानहुँ मोहि सिखावनु देहीं ॥
सास्त्र सुचिंतित पुनि पुनि देखिअ । भूप सुसेवित बस नहिं लेखिअ ॥ ४ ॥
राखिअ नारि जदपि उर माहीं । जुबती सास्त्र नृपति बस नाहीं ॥
देखहु तात बसंत सुहावा । प्रिया हीन मोहि भय उपजावा ॥ ५ ॥

Śrī Rāma left even that forest and proceeded further. The two brothers were lions among men and possessed immeasurable strength. The Lord lamented like one smitten with pangs of separation; He narrated stories and had many a dialogue (with Lakṣmaṇa). "Lakṣmaṇa, mark the beauty of the forest; whose heart will not be stirred at its sight ? United with their mates all the swarms of birds and herds of deer are reproaching me as it were. When the bucks see me and scamper away (in fear), their mates would stop them saying, 'You have nothing to fear; you may enjoy yourselves at will, O progeny of deer. He has come in search of a gold deer.' The elephants would take their mates along with them as if to teach me a lesson (that a man should never leave his wife alone). The sacred lore, however thoroughly studied, must be gone through over and over again: a king, however well served, should never be depended upon; and a woman like the scriptures and the king, even though you may cherish her in your bosom, is never thoroughly mastered. See, brother, how pleasant the spring is; yet to me, bereft of my beloved, it is frightful.
(1—5)

दो०—बिरह बिकल बलहीन मोहि जानेसि निपट अकेल ।
सहित बिपिन मधुकर खग मदन कीन्ह बगमेल ॥ ३७ (क) ॥
देखि गयउ भ्राता सहित तासु दूत सुनि बात ।
डेरा कीन्हेउ मनहुँ तब कटकु हटकि मनजात ॥ ३७ (ख) ॥

"When the god of love found me tortured by separation, languishing and all alone, he rushed against me with the verdant forest, bees and birds (for his army). His spy (the wind), however, has seen me with my brother and on his report the mind-born Cupid has held up his advancing army and besieged me as it were.
(37 A-B)

चौ०—बिटप बिसाल लता अरुझानी । बिबिध बितान दिए जनु तानी ॥
कदलि ताल बर धुजा पताका । देखि न मोह धीर मन जाका ॥ १ ॥
बिबिध भाँति फूले तरु नाना । जनु बानैत बने बहु बाना ॥
कहुँ कहुँ सुंदर बिटप सुहाए । जनु भट बिलग बिलग होइ छाए ॥ २ ॥
कूजत पिक मानहुँ गज माते । ढेक महोख ऊँट बिसराते ॥
मोर चकोर कीर बर बाजी । पारावत मराल सब ताजी ॥ ३ ॥
तीतिर लावक पदचर जूथा । बरनि न जाइ मनोज बरूथा ॥
रथ गिरि सिला दुंदुभीं झरना । चातक बंदी गुन गन बरना ॥ ४ ॥
मधुकर मुखर भेरि सहनाई । त्रिबिध बयारि बसीठीं आई ॥
चतुरंगिनी सेन सँग लीन्हें । बिचरत सबहि चुनौती दीन्हें ॥ ५ ॥

लछिमन देखत काम अनीका । रहहिं धीर तिन्ह कै जग लीका ॥
एहि कें एक परम बल नारी । तेहि तें उबर सुभट सोइ भारी ॥ ६ ॥

"Creepers have entwined themselves round gigantic trees, spreading as it were a variety of canopies in the sky. The plantains and stately palms are standing like beautiful pennons and standards; he alone who is stout of heart could help being fascinated by their sight. Trees of every description are adorned with flowers of various kinds, like warriors arrayed in all their different kinds of panoply. Other beautiful trees standing here and there look charming like champions separately encamped. The murmuring cuckoos are his excited elephants; herons and rooks, his camels and mules; peacocks, Chakoras and parrots, his noble war-horses; the pigeons and swans, his Arab steeds; the partridges and quails, his foot soldiers. But there is no describing the whole host of Cupid. Mountain rocks are his chariots; the rills, his kettledrums; the Chātakas, the bards that utter his praises; the garrulous bees are his trumpets and clarionets and the soft, cool and fragrant breezes have come in the capacity of his ambassadors. Accompanied by an army complete in all its four limbs (viz., the horse, the foot, the chariots and the elephants), he goes about challenging all to a combat. Lakṣmaṇa, they who remain firm even at the sight of Cupid's battle-array are men that count in this world. His greatest strength lies in woman; he alone who can escape her is a mighty champion. (1—6)

दो०—तात तीनि अति प्रबल खल काम क्रोध अरु लोभ ।
मुनि बिग्यान धाम मन करहिं निमिष महुँ छोभ ॥ ३८ (क) ॥
लोभ कें इच्छा दंभ बल काम कें केवल नारि ।
क्रोध कें परुष बचन बल मुनिबर कहहिं बिचारि ॥ ३८ (ख) ॥

"Brother, there are three evils most formidable of all—lust, anger and greed. In an instant they distract the mind of hermits who are the very repositories of wisdom. The weapons of greed are desire and hypocrisy, of lust naught but woman; while anger's weapon is harsh speech: so declare the great sages after deep thought." (38 A-B)

चौ०—गुनातीत सचराचर स्वामी । राम उमा सब अंतरजामी ॥
कामिन्ह कै दीनता देखाई । धीरन्ह कें मन बिरति दृढ़ाई ॥ १ ॥
क्रोध मनोज लोभ मद माया । छूटहिं सकल राम कीं दाया ॥
सो नर इंद्रजाल नहिं भूला । जापर होइ सो नट अनुकूला ॥ २ ॥
उमा कहउँ मैं अनुभव अपना । सत हरि भजनु जगत सब सपना ॥
पुनि प्रभु गए सरोबर तीरा । पंपा नाम सुभग गंभीरा ॥ ३ ॥
संत हृदय जस निर्मल बारी । बाँधे घाट मनोहर चारी ॥
जहँ तहँ पिअहिं बिबिध मृग नीरा । जनु उदार गृह जाचक भीरा ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rāma, dear Umā, says Bhagavān Śiva) is beyond the three Guṇas (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas), though the lord of the animate and

inanimate creation, and the inner controller of all. (By speaking as above) He demonstrated the miserable plight of earthly lovers and strengthened dispassion in the mind of the wise. Anger, lust, greed, pride and delusion, all these get eliminated through Śrī Rāma's grace. He who wins the favour of that divine player is never deluded by His jugglery. Umā, I tell you my own realization: the only thing real is worship of Śrī Rāma, and the whole world is a dream. The Lord then repaired to the shore of the deep and beautiful lake known by the name of Pampā. Its water was as limpid as the heart of saints and it had charming flights of steps on all its four sides. Beasts of various kinds drank of its water wherever they listed, as if there was a crowd of beggars ever present at the house of a generous man. (1—4)

दो०—पुरइनि सघन ओट जल बेगि न पाइअ मर्म ।
मायाछन्न न देखिऐ जैसें निर्गुन ब्रह्म ॥ ३९ (क) ॥
सुखी मीन सब एकरस अति अगाध जल माहिं ।
जथा धर्मसीलन्ह के दिन सुख संजुत जाहिं ॥ ३९ (ख) ॥

Covered by dense lotus leaves the water could not be easily discerned, even as the attributeless Brahma is not perceived when veiled by Māyā (Ignorance). All the fish that had their abode in the fathomless water of the lake were uniformly happy, even as the virtuous ever pass their days peacefully. (39 A-B)

चौ०—बिकसे सरसिज नाना रंगा । मधुर मुखर गुंजत बहु भृंगा ॥
बोलत जलकुक्कुट कलहंसा । प्रभु बिलोकि जनु करत प्रसंसा ॥ १ ॥
चक्रबाक बक खग समुदाई । देखत बनइ बरनि नहिं जाई ॥
सुंदर खग गन गिरा सुहाई । जात पथिक जनु लेत बोलाई ॥ २ ॥
ताल समीप मुनिन्ह गृह छाए । चहु दिसि कानन बिटप सुहाए ॥
चंपक बकुल कदंब तमाला । पाटल पनस परास रसाला ॥ ३ ॥
नव पल्लव कुसुमित तरु नाना । चंचरीक पटली कर गाना ॥
सीतल मंद सुगंध सुभाऊ । संतत बहइ मनोहर बाऊ ॥ ४ ॥
कुहू कुहू कोकिल धुनि करहीं । सुनि रव सरस ध्यान मुनि टरहीं ॥ ५ ॥

Lotuses of different colours had opened their petals and swarms of bees sweetly hummed. Swans and waterfowls made such a noise as though they had burst into the Lord's praises the moment they saw Him. Birds like the Chakrawāka and the heron were lovely beyond words; one could form an idea of their beauty only after seeing them. The voice of the beautiful birds was so captivating that it seemed they invited the wayfarers who passed by them. By the side of the lake hermits had erected their thatched cottages; there were charming forest trees all around. The Champaka, the Bakula, the Kadamba, the Tamāla, the Pāṭala, the Panasa, the Palāśa, the mango and many other varieties of trees had put forth new leaves and blossoms and swarms of bees hummed on them. A delightful breeze, which was naturally cool, gentle and fragrant, ever breathed there. The cuckoos cooed so sweetly that their melody disturbed the hermits in their meditation. (1—5)

दो०—फल भारन नमि बिटप सब रहे भूमि निअराइ।
पर उपकारी पुरुष जिमि नवहिं सुसंपति पाइ॥ ४०॥

Weighed down with the load of their fruits all the fruit trees well-nigh touched the ground, even as benevolent souls grow all the more humble on getting a large fortune. (40)

चौ०—देखि राम अति रुचिर तलावा। मज्जनु कीन्ह परम सुख पावा॥
देखी सुंदर तरुबर छाया। बैठे अनुज सहित रघुराया॥ १॥
तहँ पुनि सकल देव मुनि आए। अस्तुति करि निज धाम सिधाए॥
बैठे परम प्रसन्न कृपाला। कहत अनुज सन कथा रसाला॥ २॥
बिरहवंत भगवंतहि देखी। नारद मन भा सोच बिसेषी॥
मोर साप करि अंगीकारा। सहत राम नाना दुख भारा॥ ३॥
ऐसे प्रभुहि बिलोकउँ जाई। पुनि न बनिहि अस अवसरु आई॥
यह बिचारि नारद कर बीना। गए जहाँ प्रभु सुख आसीना॥ ४॥
गावत राम चरित मृदु बानी। प्रेम सहित बहु भाँति बखानी॥
करत दंडवत लिए उठाई। राखे बहुत बार उर लाई॥ ५॥
स्वागत पूँछि निकट बैठारे। लछिमन सादर चरन पखारे॥ ६॥

When Śrī Rāma saw this most beautiful lake, He took a dip into it and felt supremely delighted. Seeing the pleasant shade of a stately tree, the Lord of Raghus sat in it with His younger brother. There all the gods and sages came once more and having hymned His praises returned to their several homes. The All-merciful sat in a most cheerful mood and discoursed with His younger brother on delightful topics. When the sage Nārada saw the Lord suffering the pangs of separation, he felt much perturbed at heart. "It is in submission to my curse* that the Lord is undergoing many hardships of an oppressive nature. Let me, therefore, go and see such a noble lord: for such an opportunity may not present itself again." Reflecting thus Nārada went, lute in hand, to the spot where the Lord was sitting at ease. He fondly sang in a soft voice the exploits of Śrī Rāma dwelling upon them in all detail. As he prostrated himself the Lord lifted him up and held him in His embrace for a long time. After enquiring of his welfare He seated him by His side, while Lakṣmaṇa reverently laved His feet. (1—6)

दो०—नाना बिधि बिनती करि प्रभु प्रसन्न जियँ जानि।
नारद बोले बचन तब जोरि सरोरुह पानि॥ ४१॥

After much supplication and realizing that the Lord was pleased at heart, Nārada joined his lotus palms and spoke as follows:— (41)

---

* *Vide Bālakāṇḍa*, the Chaupāīs following Dohā 136, Dohā 137 and the Chaupāīs coming after it.

चौ०—सुनहु उदार सहज रघुनायक । सुंदर अगम सुगम बर दायक ॥
देहु एक बर मागउँ स्वामी । जद्यपि जानत अंतरजामी ॥ १ ॥
जानहु मुनि तुम्ह मोर सुभाऊ । जन सन कबहुँ कि करउँ दुराऊ ॥
कवन बस्तु असि प्रिय मोहि लागी । जो मुनिबर न सकहु तुम्ह मागी ॥ २ ॥
जन कहुँ कछु अदेय नहिं मोरें । अस बिस्वास तजहु जनि भोरें ॥
तब नारद बोले हरषाई । अस बर मागउँ करउँ ढिठाई ॥ ३ ॥
जद्यपि प्रभु के नाम अनेका । श्रुति कह अधिक एक तें एका ॥
राम सकल नामन्ह ते अधिका । होउ नाथ अघ खग गन बधिका ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, O Lord of Raghus, generous by nature as You are: You confer delightful boons that are unattainable as well as those that are attainable. Grant me, my master, only one boon that I ask of You, even though You already know it (even without my asking), indwelling as You do the hearts of all." "You know my disposition, dear sage: do I ever hide anything from my devotees? What object do I hold so dear, O chief of sages, that you may not ask it of me? There is nothing which I may withhold from my votary: never give up this belief even by mistake." Then Nārada gladly said, "This is the boon I presume to ask: even though my lord has many names, each greater than the rest, as the Vedas declare, let the name RĀMA, my lord, surpass all other names in exterminating the whole brood of sins even as a fowler kills an entire flock of birds.

(1—4)

दो०—राका रजनी भगति तव राम नाम सोइ सोम ।
अपर नाम उडगन बिमल बसहुँ भगत उर ब्योम ॥ ४२ (क) ॥
एवमस्तु मुनि सन कहेउ कृपासिंधु रघुनाथ ।
तब नारद मन हरष अति प्रभु पद नायउ माथ ॥ ४२ (ख) ॥

"May the name RĀMA shine as the moon and the other names as so many stars in the cloudless sky of Your devotee's heart during the full-moon night of devotion to You." The all-merciful Lord of Raghus replied to the sage, "So be it!" Thereupon Nārada felt much delighted at heart and bowed at the Lord's feet.

(42 A-B)

चौ०—अति प्रसन्न रघुनाथहि जानी । पुनि नारद बोले मृदु बानी ॥
राम जबहिं प्रेरेहु निज माया । मोहेहु मोहि सुनहु रघुराया ॥ १ ॥
तब बिबाह मैं चाहउँ कीन्हा । प्रभु केहि कारन करै न दीन्हा ॥
सुनु मुनि तोहि कहउँ सहरोसा । भजहिं जे मोहि तजि सकल भरोसा ॥ २ ॥
करउँ सदा तिन्ह कै रखवारी । जिमि बालक राखइ महतारी ॥
गह सिसु बच्छ अनल अहि धाई । तहँ राखइ जननी अरगाई ॥ ३ ॥
प्रौढ़ भएँ तेहि सुत पर माता । प्रीति करइ नहिं पाछिलि बाता ॥
मोरे प्रौढ़ तनय सम ग्यानी । बालक सुत सम दास अमानी ॥ ४ ॥
जनहि मोर बल निज बल ताही । दुहु कहँ काम क्रोध रिपु आही ॥
यह बिचारि पंडित मोहि भजहीं । पाएहुँ ग्यान भगति नहिं तजहीं ॥ ५ ॥

Seeing the Lord of Raghus so highly pleased, Nārada spoke again in gentle tones,—"Listen, O Rāma: when You impelled Your Māyā (deluding potency) and infatuated me, O Lord of Raghus, I wanted to marry. Why, then, did You not let me accomplish my desire?" "Listen, O sage: I tell you with all the emphasis at My command that I always take care of those who worship Me with undivided faith, even as a mother tends her child. If an infant child runs to catch hold of fire or a snake, the mother rescues it by drawing it aside. When, however, her son has grown up she loves him no doubt, but not as before. The wise are like My grown up sons, while humble devotees are like My infant children. A devotee depends on Me, while the former (a wise man) depends on his own strength; and both have to face enemies like lust and anger. Pondering thus the prudent adore Me and never take leave of devotion even after attaining wisdom. (1—5)

दो०—काम क्रोध लोभादि मद प्रबल मोह कै धारि।
तिन्ह महँ अति दारुन दुखद मायारूपी नारि॥ ४३॥

"Lust, anger, greed, pride etc., constitute the most powerful army of Ignorance. But among them all the fiercest and the most troublesome is that incarnation of Māyā (the Lord's deluding potency) called woman. (43)

चौ०—सुनु मुनि कह पुरान श्रुति संता। मोह बिपिन कहुँ नारि बसंता॥
जप तप नेम जलाश्रय झारी। होइ ग्रीषम सोषइ सब नारी॥ १॥
काम क्रोध मद मत्सर भेका। इन्हहि हरषप्रद बरषा एका॥
दुर्बासना कुमुद समुदाई। तिन्ह कहँ सरद सदा सुखदाई॥ २॥
धर्म सकल सरसीरुह बृंदा। होइ हिम तिन्हहि दहइ सुख मंदा॥
पुनि ममता जवास बहुताई। पलुहइ नारि सिसिर रितु पाई॥ ३॥
पाप उलूक निकर सुखकारी। नारि निबिड़ रजनी अँधिआरी॥
बुधि बल सील सत्य सब मीना। बनसी सम त्रिय कहहिं प्रबीना॥ ४॥

"Listen, O sage: the Purāṇas, the Vedas and the saints declare that woman is like the vernal season to the forest of ignorance. Nay, like the hot season she dries up all the ponds and lakes of Japa (the muttering of prayers), austerity and religious observances. Again, lust, anger, pride and jealousy are so many frogs as it were; like the rainy season woman is the only agency that gladdens them all. Even so latent desires of a vicious type are like a bed of lilies, to which, like the autumn, she is ever agreeable. All the different virtues are like a bed of lotuses; like the middle of winter, woman, who is a source of base (sensuous) pleasure, blights them all. Again, the overgrowth of the Yawāsa plant in the shape of mineness flourishes when the close of winter in the shape of woman appears. For owls in the shape of sins woman is a delightful night thick with darkness. Even so reason, strength, virtue and truth are all so many fishes as it were; and woman, so declare the wise, is like a hook to catch them. (1—4)

दो०—अवगुन मूल सूलप्रद प्रमदा सब दुख खानि।
ताते कीन्ह निवारन मुनि मैं यह जियँ जानि॥ ४४॥

"A young woman is the root of all evil, a source of torment and a mine of all woes. Therefore, bearing this in mind, O sage, I prevented your marriage." (44)

चौ०—सुनि रघुपति के बचन सुहाए। मुनि तन पुलक नयन भरि आए॥
कहहु कवन प्रभु कै असि रीती। सेवक पर ममता अरु प्रीती॥ १॥
जे न भजहिं अस प्रभु भ्रम त्यागी। ग्यान रंक नर मंद अभागी॥
पुनि सादर बोले मुनि नारद। सुनहु राम बिग्यान बिसारद॥ २॥
संतन्ह के लच्छन रघुबीरा। कहहु नाथ भव भंजन भीरा॥
सुनु मुनि संतन्ह के गुन कहऊँ। जिन्ह ते मैं उन्ह कें बस रहऊँ॥ ३॥
षट बिकार जित अनघ अकामा। अचल अकिंचन सुचि सुखधामा॥
अमितबोध अनीह मितभोगी। सत्यसार कबि कोबिद जोगी॥ ४॥
सावधान मानद मदहीना। धीर धर्म गति परम प्रबीना॥ ५॥

As the sage listened to the delightful discourse of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Raghus), a thrill ran through his body and his eyes filled with tears. He said to himself, "Tell me, is there any other master whose wont it is to show such attachment and fondness for his servants? Men who refuse to worship such a lord shaking off all delusion are bankrupt of wisdom, dull-witted and wretched." The sage Nārada again reverentially spoke to the Lord, "Listen, O Rāma, who are well-versed in sacred lore: tell me, my lord Raghuvīra (Hero of Raghu's line), the distinguishing marks of saints, O dispeller of the fear of transmigration." "I tell you, dear sage, the qualities of saints, by virtue of which they hold Me in subjection. They are masters of the six passions (lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy), sinless, disinterested, firm, possessing nothing, pure (both within and without), full of bliss, of boundless wisdom, desireless, moderate in diet, truthful, inspired, learned and united with God, circumspect, bestowing honour on others, free from pride, strong-minded and highly conversant with the course of Dharma (righteousness).

(1—5)

दो०—गुनागार संसार दुख रहित बिगत संदेह।
तजि मम चरन सरोज प्रिय तिन्ह कहुँ देह न गेह॥ ४५॥

"They are abodes of virtue, above the sorrows of the world and free from doubt. Nothing besides My lotus feet is dear to them, not even their body nor their home.

(45)

चौ०—निज गुन श्रवन सुनत सकुचाहीं। पर गुन सुनत अधिक हरषाहीं॥
सम सीतल नहिं त्यागहिं नीती। सरल सुभाउ सबहि सन प्रीती॥ १॥
जप तप ब्रत दम संजम नेमा। गुरु गोबिंद बिप्र पद प्रेमा॥
श्रद्धा छमा मयत्री दाया। मुदिता मम पद प्रीति अमाया॥ २॥
बिरति बिबेक बिनय बिग्याना। बोध जथारथ बेद पुराना॥
दंभ मान मद करहिं न काऊ। भूलि न देहिं कुमारग पाऊ॥ ३॥
गावहिं सुनहिं सदा मम लीला। हेतु रहित परहित रत सीला॥
मुनि सुनु साधुन्ह के गुन जेते। कहि न सकहिं सारद श्रुति तेते॥ ४॥

"They blush to hear themselves praised but feel much delighted to hear others' praises. Even-minded and placid, they never abandon the right course. Guileless by nature and loving, they are given over to prayer, austerity, control of the senses, self-denial and religious observances and undertake sacred vows. They are devoted to the feet of their Guru, Lord Govinda (Viṣṇu) and the Brahmans. They are full of piety, forgiving, friendly to all, compassionate, cheerful under all circumstances and sincerely devoted to My feet. They are further characterized by dispassion, discretion, modesty, knowledge of the truth relating to God as well as by a correct knowledge of the Vedas and Purāṇas. They never take recourse to hypocrisy, pride or arrogance nor set their foot on the evil path even by mistake. They are ever engaged in singing or hearing My stories and are intent on doing good to others without any consideration. In short, O good sage, the qualities of the saints are so numerous that they cannot be exhausted even by Śāradā (the goddess of speech) nor by the Vedas. (1—4)

छं०—कहि सक न सारद सेष नारद सुनत पद पंकज गहे ।
अस दीनबंधु कृपाल अपने भगत गुन निज मुख कहे ॥
सिरु नाइ बारहिं बार चरनन्हि ब्रह्मपुर नारद गए ।
ते धन्य तुलसीदास आस बिहाइ जे हरि रँग रँए ॥

"Neither Śāradā nor Śeṣa could tell them!" Even as he heard this the sage Nārada clasped the Lord's lotus feet. In this way the all-merciful Lord, the befriender of the meek, recounted with His own lips the virtues of His devotees. Nārada bowed his head at the Lord's feet again and again and left for the abode of Brahmā (the Creator). Blessed are they, says Tulasīdāsa, who, giving up all hopes, are steeped in love for Śrī Hari.

दो०—रावनारि जसु पावन गावहिं सुनहिं जे लोग ।
राम भगति दृढ़ पावहिं बिनु बिराग जप जोग ॥ ४६ (क) ॥
दीप सिखा सम जुबति तन मन जनि होसि पतंग ।
भजहि राम तजि काम मद करहि सदा सतसंग ॥ ४६ (ख) ॥

People who sing or hear the sanctifying praises of Rāvaṇa's Foe shall be rewarded with steadfast devotion to Śrī Rāma even without dispassion, prayer or concentration of mind. The body of a young woman is like the flame of a candle; be not a moth to it, O my mind. Abandoning lust and pride worship Śrī Rāma and enjoy the company of saints. (46 A-B)

[PAUSE 22 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

इति श्रीमद्रामचरितमानसे सकलकलिकलुषविध्वंसने
तृतीयः सोपानः समाप्तः ।

Thus ends the third descent into the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, that eradicates all the impurities of the Kali age.

ॐ

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

(The Manasa lake containing the exploits of Sri Rama)

Descent Four

(Kiṣkindhā-Kāṇḍa)

श्लोक

कुन्देन्दीवरसुन्दरावतिबलौ विज्ञानधामावुभौ
शोभाढ्यौ वरधन्विनौ श्रुतिनुतौ गोविप्रवृन्दप्रियौ ।
मायामानुषरूपिणौ रघुवरौ सद्धर्मवर्मौ हितौ
सीतान्वेषणतत्परौ पथिगतौ भक्तिप्रदौ तौ हि नः ॥ १ ॥

Lovely as a jasmine and a blue lotus, of surpassing strength, repositories of wisdom, endowed with natural grace, excellent bowmen, hymned by the Vedas, and lovers of the cow and the Brahmans, who appeared in the form of mortal men through their own Māyā (deluding potency) as the two noble scions of Raghu, the armours of true religion, friendly to all and journeying in quest for Sītā, may they both grant us Devotion. (1)

ब्रह्माम्भोधिसमुद्भवं कलिमलप्रध्वंसनं चाव्ययं
श्रीमच्छम्भुमुखेन्दुसुन्दरवरे संशोभितं सर्वदा ।
संसारामयभेषजं सुखकरं श्रीजानकीजीवनं
धन्यास्ते कृतिनः पिबन्ति सततं श्रीरामनामामृतम् ॥ २ ॥

Blessed are those pious souls who ceaselessly quaff the nectar of Śrī Rāma's Name, churned out of the ocean of the Vedas, which completely destroys the sins of the Kali age and knows no decay, which shines ever bright in the most beautiful moon-like mouth of the glorious Śambhu (Lord Śiva), a palatable remedy for the disease of transmigration and the very life of Sītā (Janaka's Daughter). (2)

सो०—मुकुति जन्म महि जानि ग्यान खानि अघ हानि कर ।
जहँ बस संभु भवानि सो कासी सेइअ कस न ॥
जरत सकल सुर बृंद बिषम गरल जेहिं पान किय ।
तेहि न भजसि मन मंद को कृपाल संकर सरिस ॥

Why not reside in Kāśī (the modern Banaras), the abode of Śambhu and Bhavānī (Goddess Pārvatī), knowing it to be the birthplace of Mukti (final beatitude), the mine of spiritual wisdom and the destroyer of sins ? O stupid mind, how is it that you do not worship Him who drank off the deadly venom (churned out of the ocean of milk at the dawn of creation), the very presence of which was burning all the host of gods ? Who else is so merciful as Lord Śankara ?

चौ०—आगें चले बहुरि रघुराया । रिष्यमूक पर्बत निअराया ॥
तहँ रह सचिव सहित सुग्रीवा । आवत देखि अतुल बल सींवा ॥ १ ॥
अति सभीत कह सुनु हनुमाना । पुरुष जुगल बल रूप निधाना ॥
धरि बटु रूप देखु तैं जाई । कहेसु जानि जियँ सयन बुझाई ॥ २ ॥
पठए बालि होहिं मन मैला । भागौं तुरत तजौं यह सैला ॥
बिप्र रूप धरि कपि तहँ गयऊ । माथ नाइ पूछत अस भयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
को तुम्ह स्यामल गौर सरीरा । छत्री रूप फिरहु बन बीरा ॥
कठिन भूमि कोमल पद गामी । कवन हेतु बिचरहु बन स्वामी ॥ ४ ॥
मृदुल मनोहर सुंदर गाता । सहत दुसह बन आतप बाता ॥
की तुम्ह तीनि देव महँ कोऊ । नर नारायन की तुम्ह दोऊ ॥ ५ ॥

The Lord of Raghus proceeded still further and approached the Ṛṣyamūka hill. There dwelt Sugrīva (a monkey chief*) with his counsellors. When he saw the two brothers, the highest embodiments of immeasurable strength, he was exceedingly alarmed and said (to one of his ministers), "Listen, Hanumān: those two men are repositories of strength and beauty. Disguised as a Brahman student go and see them and perceiving their intention in your mind inform me accordingly by means of signs. If they have been despatched by the malicious Vālī, I must leave this hill and flee away at once." Taking the form of a Brahman the monkey (Hanumān) went up to the two brothers and bowing his head accosted them thus: "Who are you, heroes,—one of dark hue, the other fair,—that roam the woods disguised as Kṣatriyas ? Treading the hard ground with your tender feet, wherefore are you wandering in the forest, my masters ? Though possessed of delicate, charming and beautiful limbs, how is it that you have exposed yourself to the scorching sun and stormy wind of these wild regions ? Do you count in the Trinity (viz., Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the three worlds) or are you the twin divine sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa ?

(1–5)

दो०—जग कारन तारन भव भंजन धरनी भार ।
की तुम्ह अखिल भुवन पति लीन्ह मनुज अवतार ॥ १ ॥

* Though monkeys to all appearance, Sugrīva and others were as good as highly civilized men and were incarnations of gods. They could change their form at will and were not only endowed with human speech but were proficient in the arts and sciences. They walked straight, even though they could easily climb up to tree-tops and mountain-summits. They can thus be easily classed as a human tribe or clan.

"Or are you the Prime Cause of the world and the Lord of all the spheres, manifested in human form to bridge the ocean of mundane existence and relieve the burden of the earth ?" (1)

चौ०—कोसलेस दसरथ के जाए। हम पितु बचन मानि बन आए॥
नाम राम लछिमन दोउ भाई। संग नारि सुकुमारि सुहाई॥ १॥
इहाँ हरी निसिचर बैदेही। बिप्र फिरहिं हम खोजत तेही॥
आपन चरित कहा हम गाई। कहहु बिप्र निज कथा बुझाई॥ २॥
प्रभु पहिचानि परेउ गहि चरना। सो सुख उमा जाइ नहिं बरना॥
पुलकित तन मुख आव न बचना। देखत रुचिर बेष कै रचना॥ ३॥
पुनि धीरजु धरि अस्तुति कीन्ही। हरष हृदयँ निज नाथहि चीन्ही॥
मोर न्याउ मैं पूछा साईं। तुम्ह पूछहु कस नर की नाईं॥ ४॥
तव माया बस फिरउँ भुलाना। ता ते मैं नहिं प्रभु पहिचाना॥ ५॥

"We are sons of King Daśaratha, the lord of Kosala, and have come to the forest in obedience to our father's command. We two brothers are called by the names of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. We had with us a pretty and delicate girl, the daughter of King Videha, who has been carried away by some demon here. It is in quest of her that we are moving about, O holy Brahman. We have furnished you with our account in some detail; now tell us your story in a comprehensive manner, O good Brahman." Now Hanumān recognized his lord and falling to the ground clasped His feet. That joy, Umā, was more than could be described. A thrill ran through his body and no words came to his lips as he gazed on the lovely style of their dress. Then recovering himself he sang His praises and was glad at heart to have found his master. "It was quite in the fitness of things that I questioned my lord; but how is it that You ask me like a mortal ? I have been roving in error under the spell of Your Māyā (deluding potency); it was for this reason that I failed to recognize my lord. (1—5)

दो०—एकु मैं मंद मोहबस कुटिल हृदय अग्यान।
पुनि प्रभु मोहि बिसारेउ दीनबंधु भगवान॥ २॥

"In the first place I am dull-witted and deluded, wicked at heart and ignorant; to crown all, my master, who is a befriender of the humble and is no other than the almighty Lord Himself, had forgotten me. (2)

चौ०—जदपि नाथ बहु अवगुन मोरें। सेवक प्रभुहि परै जनि भोरें॥
नाथ जीव तव मायाँ मोहा। सो निस्तरइ तुम्हारेहिं छोहा॥ १॥
ता पर मैं रघुबीर दोहाई। जानउँ नहिं कछु भजन उपाई॥
सेवक सुत पति मातु भरोसें। रहइ असोच बनइ प्रभु पोसें॥ २॥
अस कहि परेउ चरन अकुलाई। निज तनु प्रगटि प्रीति उर छाई॥
तब रघुपति उठाइ उर लावा। निज लोचन जल सींचि जुड़ावा॥ ३॥
सुनु कपि जियँ मानसि जनि ऊना। तैं मम प्रिय लछिमन ते दूना॥
समदरसी मोहि कह सब कोऊ। सेवक प्रिय अनन्यगति सोऊ॥ ४॥

"Although, my lord, I have many faults, let not the servant be cast into oblivion by the master. The Jīva (ego), O Lord, is deluded by Your Māyā and can be redeemed only by Your grace. On top of it, I swear by the Hero of Raghu's line, I know neither adoration nor any other means (of pleasing You). A servant depends on his master and a child on its mother and both remain free from anxiety; for a master needs must take care of his servant." So saying he fell at the Lord's feet much agitated; his heart was overwhelmed with love and he manifested his own (monkey) form. The Lord of Raghus then lifted and clasped him to His bosom and soothed him by wetting him with the tears of His eyes. "Listen, O Hanumān: be not depressed at heart; you are twice as dear to Me as Laksmana. Everyone says that I look upon all with the same eye; but a devotee is particularly dear to Me because he too depends on none but Me. (1–4)

दो०—सो अनन्य जाकें असि मति न टरइ हनुमंत।
मैं सेवक सचराचर रूप स्वामि भगवंत ॥ ३ ॥

"And he alone, Hanumān, is exclusively devoted to Me, who is steadfast in his conviction that he is the servant and that the Lord manifested in the form of the whole animate and inanimate creation is his master." (3)

चौ०—देखि पवनसुत पति अनुकूला। हृदयँ हरष बीती सब सूला ॥
नाथ सैल पर कपिपति रहई। सो सुग्रीव दास तव अहई ॥ १ ॥
तेहि सन नाथ मयत्री कीजे। दीन जानि तेहि अभय करीजे ॥
सो सीता कर खोज कराइहि। जहँ तहँ मरकट कोटि पठाइहि ॥ २ ॥
एहि बिधि सकल कथा समुझाई। लिए दुऔ जन पीठि चढ़ाई ॥
जब सुग्रीवँ राम कहुँ देखा। अतिसय जन्म धन्य करि लेखा ॥ ३ ॥
सादर मिलेउ नाइ पद माथा। भेंटेउ अनुज सहित रघुनाथा ॥
कपि कर मन बिचार एहि रीती। करिहहिं बिधि मो सन ए प्रीती ॥ ४ ॥

When Hanumān, the son of the wind-god, found his master so gracious to him he rejoiced at heart and all his agony disappeared. "My Lord, on the summit of this hill dwells Sugrīva, the chief of the monkeys; he is a servant of Yours. Make friends with him, my lord; knowing him to be in affliction rid him of all fear. He will have Sītā tracked by drafting millions of monkeys in every direction (in search of Her)." Having thus explained to Him everything, he lifted both the brothers on his back (and took them to the place where Sugrīva was). When Sugrīva saw Śrī Rāma, he accounted his birth as highly blessed. He reverently advanced to meet Him and bowed his head at His feet; while the Lord of Raghus and His younger brother embraced him in return. The monkey chief pondered thus within himself, "Will they, good heavens, make friends with me ?"

(1–4)

दो०—तब हनुमंत उभय दिसि की सब कथा सुनाइ।
पावक साखी देइ करि जोरी प्रीति दृढ़ाइ ॥ ४ ॥

Then Hanumān related all the circumstances of both the sides, and having installed the sacred fire as a witness he concluded a firm alliance (between Śrī Rāma and Sugrīva). (4)

चौ०—कीन्हि प्रीति कछु बीच न राखा । लछिमन राम चरित सब भाषा ॥
कह सुग्रीव नयन भरि बारी । मिलिहि नाथ मिथिलेसकुमारी ॥ १ ॥
मंत्रिन्ह सहित इहाँ एक बारा । बैठ रहेउँ मैं करत बिचारा ॥
गगन पंथ देखी मैं जाता । परबस परी बहुत बिलपाता ॥ २ ॥
राम राम हा राम पुकारी । हमहि देखि दीन्हेउ पट डारी ॥
मागा राम तुरत तेहिं दीन्हा । पट उर लाइ सोच अति कीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
कह सुग्रीव सुनहु रघुबीरा । तजहु सोच मन आनहु धीरा ॥
सब प्रकार करिहउँ सेवकाई । जेहि बिधि मिलिहि जानकी आई ॥ ४ ॥

The alliance was thus unreservedly concluded and Lakṣmaṇa narrated all the past history of Śrī Rāma. Said Sugrīva with his eyes full of tears, "The daughter of Janaka (the lord of Mithilā), my lord, will be surely recovered. On one occasion when I sat here deliberating with my counsellors I saw her fallen in the enemy's hands and being borne through the air loudly wailing. Crying 'Rāma, Rāma, Ah! my Rāma' she dropped her scarf when she saw us." When Śrī Rāma asked for that he handed it over to Him at once. Śrī Rāma pressed it to His bosom and grieved much. Said Sugrīva, "Listen, O hero of Raghu's line: sorrow no more and take courage in your heart. I will render service to you in every way so that Janaka's daughter may come and see you." (1—4)

दो०—सखा बचन सुनि हरषे कृपासिंधु बलसींव ।
कारन कवन बसहु बन मोहि कहहु सुग्रीव ॥ ५ ॥

The Ocean of Mercy, who was at the same time the highest embodiment of physical strength, rejoiced to hear his ally's words. "Tell me, Sugrīva, why have you come to stay in the forest?" (5)

चौ०—नाथ बालि अरु मैं द्वौ भाई । प्रीति रही कछु बरनि न जाई ॥
मय सुत मायावी तेहि नाऊँ । आवा सो प्रभु हमरें गाऊँ ॥ १ ॥
अर्ध राति पुर द्वार पुकारा । बाली रिपु बल सहै न पारा ॥
धावा बालि देखि सो भागा । मैं पुनि गयउँ बंधु सँग लागा ॥ २ ॥
गिरिबर गुहाँ पैठ सो जाई । तब बालीं मोहि कहा बुझाई ॥
परिखेसु मोहि एक पखवारा । नहिं आवौं तब जानेसु मारा ॥ ३ ॥
मास दिवस तहँ रहेउँ खरारी । निसरी रुधिर धार तहँ भारी ॥
बालि हतेसि मोहि मारिहि आई । सिला देइ तहँ चलेउँ पराई ॥ ४ ॥
मंत्रिन्ह पुर देखा बिनु साईं । दीन्हेउ मोहि राज बरिआई ॥
बाली ताहि मारि गृह आवा । देखि मोहि जियँ भेद बढ़ावा ॥ ५ ॥

रिपु सम मोहि मारेसि अति भारी। हरि लीन्हेसि सर्बसु अरु नारी॥
ताकें भय रघुबीर कृपाला। सकल भुवन मैं फिरेउँ बिहाला॥ ६॥
इहाँ साप बस आवत नाहीं। तदपि सभीत रहउँ मन माहीं॥
सुनि सेवक दुख दीनदयाला। फरकि उठीं द्वै भुजा बिसाला॥ ७॥

"My lord, Vālī and myself are two brothers. The affection that existed between us was past all telling. Once upon a time, O lord, the son of the demon Maya, who was known by the name of Māyāvī, came to our town (Kiṣkindhā). At dead of night he called out at the gate of the town. Vālī could not brook his enemy's challenge to a bout and sallied forth to meet him. But when he saw Vālī coming, he took to flight. I too had accompanied my brother. The enemy went and entered the cave of a big mountain. Then Vālī gave instructions to me, "Await my return till a fortnight. If I do not return, then take me as slain." When I had waited there for a month, O slayer of Khara, a copious stream of blood issued from the cave. I, therefore, concluded that the demon had slain Vālī and that he would come and kill me too. Accordingly I blocked the mouth of the cave with a rock and fled away. When the ministers saw the town without a master, they forced me to accept the throne. Meanwhile Vālī, who had killed the enemy, returned home and saw me (installed on the throne), he nursed a grudge against me in his heart. He gave me a most severe beating as he would an enemy, and robbed me of all that I had including my wife. For fear of him, O gracious hero of Raghu's line, I wandered all over the world in a pitiable condition. A curse* prevents him from coming over here; yet I remain ill at ease in mind." When the gracious Lord heard of His devotee's distress both His long arms started throbbing (thus showing His martial spirit as well as His determination to punish Vālī) (1—7)

दो०—सुनु सुग्रीव मारिहउँ बालिहि एकहिं बान।
ब्रह्म रुद्र सरनागत गएँ न उबरिहिं प्रान॥ ६॥

"Listen, Sugrīva: I will kill Vālī with a single arrow. His life will not be saved even if he takes refuge with Brahmā (the Creator) or even with Rudra (Lord Śiva) (6)

चौ०—जे न मित्र दुख होहिं दुखारी। तिन्हहि बिलोकत पातक भारी॥
निज दुख गिरि सम रज करि जाना। मित्रक दुख रज मेरु समाना॥ १॥
जिन्ह कें असि मति सहज न आई। ते सठ कत हठि करत मिताई॥
कुपथ निवारि सुपंथ चलावा। गुन प्रगटै अवगुनन्हि दुरावा॥ २॥

* The demon Māyāvī had a younger brother, Dundubhi by name. Dundubhi too had, on a previous occasion, attacked Vāli in the form of a buffalo and was slain by him. Vāli hurled the gigantic corpse of the buffalo to a distance of eight miles from his capital. A few drops of blood, however, fell from its mouth in the hermitage of sage Matanga on the Ṛṣyamūka hill. This enraged the Ṛṣi, who pronounced a curse that whoever had desecrated his hermitage by spilling blood there would have his head shattered to pieces if he dared approach the precincts of his hermitage

देत लेत मन संक न धरई । बल अनुमान सदा हित करई ॥
बिपति काल कर सतगुन नेहा । श्रुति कह संत मित्र गुन एहा ॥ ३ ॥
आगें कह मृदु बचन बनाई । पाछें अनहित मन कुटिलाई ॥
जा कर चित अहि गति सम भाई । अस कुमित्र परिहरेहिं भलाई ॥ ४ ॥
सेवक सठ नृप कृपन कुनारी । कपटी मित्र सूल सम चारी ॥
सखा सोच त्यागहु बल मोरें । सब बिधि घटब काज मैं तोरें ॥ ५ ॥
कह सुग्रीव सुनहु रघुबीरा । बालि महाबल अति रनधीरा ॥
दुंदुभि अस्थि ताल देखराए । बिनु प्रयास रघुनाथ ढहाए ॥ ६ ॥
देखि अमित बल बाढ़ी प्रीती । बालि बधब इन्ह भइ परतीती ॥
बार बार नावइ पद सीसा । प्रभुहि जानि मन हरष कपीसा ॥ ७ ॥
उपजा ग्यान बचन तब बोला । नाथ कृपाँ मन भयउ अलोला ॥
सुख संपति परिवार बड़ाई । सब परिहरि करिहउँ सेवकाई ॥ ८ ॥
ए सब रामभगति के बाधक । कहहिं संत तव पद अवराधक ॥
सत्रु मित्र सुख दुख जग माहीं । माया कृत परमारथ नाहीं ॥ ९ ॥
बालि परम हित जासु प्रसादा । मिलेहु राम तुम्ह समन बिषादा ॥
सपनें जेहि सन होइ लराई । जागें समुझत मन सकुचाई ॥ १० ॥
अब प्रभु कृपा करहु एहि भाँती । सब तजि भजनु करौं दिन राती ॥
सुनि बिराग संजुत कपि बानी । बोले बिहँसि रामु धनुपानी ॥ ११ ॥
जो कछु कहेहु सत्य सब सोई । सखा बचन मम मृषा न होई ॥
नट मरकट इव सबहि नचावत । रामु खगेस बेद अस गावत ॥ १२ ॥
लै सुग्रीव संग रघुनाथा । चले चाप सायक गहि हाथा ॥
तब रघुपति सुग्रीव पठावा । गर्जेसि जाइ निकट बल पावा ॥ १३ ॥
सुनत बालि क्रोधातुर धावा । गहि कर चरन नारि समुझावा ॥
सुनु पति जिन्हहि मिलेउ सुग्रीवा । ते द्वौ बंधु तेज बल सींवा ॥ १४ ॥
कोसलेस सुत लछिमन रामा । कालहु जीति सकहिं संग्रामा ॥ १५ ॥

"One would incur great sin by the very sight of those who are not distressed to see the distress of a friend. A man should regard his own mountain-like troubles as of no more account than a mere grain of sand, while the troubles of a friend should appear to him like Mount Sumeru, though really they may be as trifling as a grain of sand. Those fools who are not of such a temperament presume in vain to make friends with anybody. A friend should restrain his companion from the evil path and lead him on the path of virtue; he should proclaim the latter's good points and screen his faults, should give and take things without any scruple and serve his friend's interests to the best of his ability and finding him in distress love him a hundred times more than ever. The Vedas declare these to be the qualities of a noble friend. He, however, who contrives to speak bland words to your face and harms you behind your back and harbours some evil design in his heart, and whose mind is as tortuous as the movements of a snake is an unworthy

friend and one had better bid good-bye to such a friend. A stupid servant, a stingy monarch, a bad wife and a false friend—these four are tormenting like a pike. Relying on my strength, dear friend, grieve no more; I will serve your cause in every way possible." Said Sugrīva, "Listen, O Hero of Raghu's race: Vālī is possessed of immense strength and is exceedingly staunch in battle." He then showed Him Dundubhi's bones and the seven palm-trees, which were struck down by the Lord of Raghus without any exertion. When Sugrīva witnessed Srī Rāma's immeasurable strength his affection for Him grew all the more and he was now satisfied that he would succeed in killing Vālī. He bowed his head at His feet again and again and was delighted at heart to recognize the Lord. When the light of wisdom dawned on him, he said, "My mind, O Lord, has been set at rest by Your grace. Renouncing pleasure, prosperity, home, personal glory and all I will render service to You. All these are stumbling-blocks on the path of Devotion to Śrī Rāma (Yourself): so declare saints given to the worship of Your feet. Pairs of opposites such as friend and foe, joy and sorrow, in this world are products of Maya (Illusion) and have no reality. Vālī is my greatest friend, by whose grace I have met You, Rāma, the Allayer of sorrow. On waking from a dream when a man comes to know the identity of him with whom he had fought in the dream, he feels abashed. Now, my lord, do me this favour that I may renounce all and worship You night and day." On hearing the words of Sugrīva, imbued as they were with dispassion, Srī Rāma, who held a bow in His hand, smiled and said, "Whatever you have said is all true; but my words, O friend, can never be otherwise." Śrī Rama (says the saint Kākabhusundi), O Garuda (king of birds), makes us all dance even as a juggler would make his monkey dance: so declare the Vedas. Taking Sugrīva with Him the Lord of Raghus proceeded with a bow and arrow in His hands. Then the Lord of Raghus sent Sugrīva, who, strengthened by Srī Rama, thundered under the very nose of Vālī. On hearing his roar Vālī sallied forth frantic with fury. His wife, however, clasped his feet with her hands and warned him thus: "Listen, my lord: the two brothers with whom Sugrīva has concluded an alliance are of unapproachable majesty and might. They are no other than Śrī Rāma and Laksmana, the sons of King Daśaratha (the lord of Kosala), who can conquer Death himself on the field of battle."

(1—15)

दो०—कह बाली सुनु भीरु प्रिय समदरसी रघुनाथ।
जौं कदाचि मोहि मारहिं तौ पुनि होउँ सनाथ ॥ ७ ॥

Said Vālī, "Listen, my timid darling, the Lord of Raghus looks upon all with the same eye. Even if He kills me, I will attain His divine abode and have Him as my eternal Lord."

(7)

चौ०—अस कहि चला महा अभिमानी। तृन समान सुग्रीवहि जानी ॥
भिरे उभौ बाली अति तर्जा। मुठिका मारि महाधुनि गर्जा ॥ १ ॥
तब सुग्रीव बिकल होइ भागा। मुष्टि प्रहार बज्र सम लागा ॥
मैं जो कहा रघुबीर कृपाला। बंधु न होइ मोर यह काला ॥ २ ॥

एकरूप तुम्ह भ्राता दोऊ । तेहि भ्रम तें नहिं मारेउँ सोऊ ॥
कर परसा सुग्रीव सरीरा । तनु भा कुलिस गई सब पीरा ॥ ३ ॥
मेली कंठ सुमन कै माला । पठवा पुनि बल देइ बिसाला ॥
पुनि नाना बिधि भई लराई । बिटप ओट देखहिं रघुराई ॥ ४ ॥

So saying he sallied forth in his great pride, thinking no more of Sugriva than of a blade of grass. The two brothers closed with each other. Vālī browbeat Sugrīva, and striking him with his fist roared in a thundering voice. Sugrīva now fled in dismay (and returned to Śrī Rāma); the stroke of his clenched fist had fallen on him as a bolt from heaven. "What did I say, O gracious Hero of Raghu's line ? This is no brother of mine but Death himself." "You two brothers are identical in appearance; it was because of this confusion that I did not kill him." He stroked Sugrīva's body with His hand and lo ! it became as hard as adamant and all his pain was gone. He put on his neck a wreath of flowers and giving him enormous strength sent him back. Again the two brothers fought in many ways, while the Lord of Raghus watched them from behind a tree. (1—4)

दो०—बहु छल बल सुग्रीव कर हियँ हारा भय मानि ।
मारा बालि राम तब हृदय माझ सर तानि ॥ ८ ॥

When Sugrīva had tried many a trick and exerted all his might he lost heart and felt much alarmed. Śrī Rāma then drew His arrow and shot Vālī in the heart. (8)

चौ०—परा बिकल महि सर के लागें । पुनि उठि बैठ देखि प्रभु आगें ॥
स्याम गात सिर जटा बनाएँ । अरुन नयन सर चाप चढ़ाएँ ॥ १ ॥
पुनि पुनि चितइ चरन चित दीन्हा । सुफल जन्म माना प्रभु चीन्हा ॥
हृदयँ प्रीति मुख बचन कठोरा । बोला चितइ राम की ओरा ॥ २ ॥
धर्म हेतु अवतरेहु गोसाईं । मारेहु मोहि ब्याध की नाईं ॥
मैं बैरी सुग्रीव पिआरा । अवगुन कवन नाथ मोहि मारा ॥ ३ ॥
अनुज बधू भगिनी सुत नारी । सुनु सठ कन्या सम ए चारी ॥
इन्हहि कुदृष्टि बिलोकइ जोई । ताहि बधें कछु पाप न होई ॥ ४ ॥
मूढ़ तोहि अतिसय अभिमाना । नारि सिखावन करसि न काना ॥
मम भुज बल आश्रित तेहि जानी । मारा चहसि अधम अभिमानी ॥ ५ ॥

Struck by the shaft Vālī fell to the ground smarting with pain; again he sprang up and sat, when he saw the Lord before him—dark of hue, with His matted hair coiled on His head, bloodshot eyes and the bow still drawn. Gazing on Him again and again he fixed his heart on His feet; now that he recognized the Lord he felt that he had realized the reward of his birth. Although his heart was full of love, the words on his lips were harsh; looking towards Śrī Rāma he said, "Even though, my lord, You descended on earth for upholding righteousness, You have killed me as a hunter would kill a wild beast. I, Your enemy and Sugrīva, Your dear friend ! For what

fault did You take my life, my lord?" "Listen, O wretch: a younger brother's wife, a sister, a daughter-in-law and one's own daughter—these four are alike. One would incur no sin by killing him who looks upon these with an evil eye. Fool, in your extravagant pride you paid no heed to your wife's warning. You knew that your brother had taken refuge under the might of my arm; and yet in your vile arrogance you sought to kill him!" (1—5)

दो०—सुनहु राम स्वामी सन चल न चातुरी मोरि ।
प्रभु अजहूँ मैं पापी अंतकाल गति तोरि ॥ ९ ॥

"Listen, Rāma: my shrewdness cannot avail against my master. But, my lord, am I a sinner yet even though I have found shelter in You at the hour of my death?" (9)

चौ०—सुनत राम अति कोमल बानी । बालि सीस परसेउ निज पानी ॥
अचल करौं तनु राखहु प्राना । बालि कहा सुनु कृपानिधाना ॥ १ ॥
जन्म जन्म मुनि जतनु कराहीं । अंत राम कहि आवत नाहीं ॥
जासु नाम बल संकर कासी । देत सबहि सम गति अबिनासी ॥ २ ॥
मम लोचन गोचर सोइ आवा । बहुरि कि प्रभु अस बनिहि बनावा ॥ ३ ॥

When Śrī Rāma heard this most tender speech of Vālī, He stroked his head with His hand. "I make your body immortal; you may keep up your life." Said Vālī, "Listen, O Ocean of Mercy: sages continue their efforts (for God-Realization) during successive births; but at the last moment they fail to utter the name 'Rāma' But He, on the strength of whose Name Lord Śankara bestows immortality* on all alike, has appeared in a visible form before my very eyes! Shall I ever get such a golden opportunity again? (1—3)

छं०—सो नयन गोचर जासु गुन नित नेति कहि श्रुति गावहीं ।
जिति पवन मन गो निरस करि मुनि ध्यान कबहुँक पावहीं ॥
मोहि जानि अति अभिमान बस प्रभु कहेउ राखु सरीरही ।
अस कवन सठ हठि काटि सुरतरु बारि करिहि बबूरही ॥ १ ॥
अब नाथ करि करुना बिलोकहु देहु जो बर मागऊँ ।
जेहिं जोनि जन्मौं कर्म बस तहँ राम पद अनुरागऊँ ॥
यह तनय मम सम बिनय बल कल्यानप्रद प्रभु लीजिऐ ।
गहि बाँह सुर नर नाह आपन दास अंगद कीजिऐ ॥ २ ॥

"He has appeared before my very eyes, whose praises the Vedas ever sing only in negative terms and whom sages are scarcely able to perceive in their meditation even after they have controlled their breath and mind and freed their senses from passion. Knowing me to be a victim of excessive pride the Lord said to me, 'Preserve your life!' But who would be such a fool as to insist on cutting down a celestial tree and using it as a fence to protect an acacia tree?

* It is mentioned in the scriptures that Lord Śiva personally whispers the name 'Rāma' into the right ear of every creature dying at Kāśī and redeems its soul.

Now, my lord, look upon me with compassion and grant me the boon that I ask: in whatever species of life it may be my fate to be born, I may continue to love Srī Rāma's (Your) feet. This son of mine, Angada by name, is my equal in training and strength. O Bestower of Blessedness; therefore, accept him, my master; and holding him by the arm, O Lord of gods and men, treat him as Your servant." (1—2)

दो०—राम चरन दृढ़ प्रीति करि बालि कीन्ह तनु त्याग ।
सुमन माल जिमि कंठ ते गिरत न जानइ नाग ॥ १० ॥

Intensifying his devotion to Śrī Rama's feet Vālī dropped his body (without his knowing it) even as an elephant little knows the falling of a wreath of flowers from its neck. (10)

चौ०—राम बालि निज धाम पठावा । नगर लोग सब ब्याकुल धावा ॥
नाना बिधि बिलाप कर तारा । छूटे केस न देह सँभारा ॥ १ ॥
तारा बिकल देखि रघुराया । दीन्ह ग्यान हरि लीन्ही माया ॥
छिति जल पावक गगन समीरा । पंच रचित अति अधम सरीरा ॥ २ ॥
प्रगट सो तनु तव आगें सोवा । जीव नित्य केहि लगि तुम्ह रोवा ॥
उपजा ग्यान चरन तब लागी । लीन्हेसि परम भगति बर मागी ॥ ३ ॥
उमा दारु जोषित की नाईं । सबहि नचावत रामु गोसाईं ॥
तब सुग्रीवहि आयसु दीन्हा । मृतक कर्म बिधिवत सब कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥
राम कहा अनुजहि समुझाई । राज देहु सुग्रीवहि जाई ॥
रघुपति चरन नाइ करि माथा । चले सकल प्रेरित रघुनाथा ॥ ५ ॥

Srī Rama sent away Vālī to His own abode. All the people of the city ran in dismay. With dishevelled hair and a tottering frame Tara (Vālī's wife) wailed in many ways. When the Lord of Raghus saw her distress, He imparted to her wisdom and dispelled her delusion. "Made up of the five elements, viz:, earth, water, fire, ether and air, this body is extremely vile. The mortal frame lies buried in eternal sleep before your eyes, while the soul is everlasting. For whom, then, do you lament?" The light of wisdom dawned on her and now she embraced His feet and asked of Him the boon of supreme Devotion. The almighty Srī Rama, O Umā, (says Bhagavān Śankara) makes us all dance like so many marionettes. Srī Rāma then gave orders to Sugrīva, who performed all the funeral rites with due ceremony. He next instructed His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa), "Go and crown Sugrīva as the king." Bowing their head to the Lord of Raghus, all left in obedience to His orders. (1—5)

दो०—लछिमन तुरत बोलाए पुरजन बिप्र समाज ।
राजु दीन्ह सुग्रीव कहँ अंगद कहँ जुबराज ॥ ११ ॥

Laksmana immediately summoned the citizens and the Brahmans and (in their presence) crowned Sugrīva as the king and installed Angada as the Crown Prince. (11)

चौ०—उमा राम सम हित जग माहीं । गुरु पितु मातु बंधु प्रभु नाहीं ॥
सुर नर मुनि सब कै यह रीती । स्वारथ लागि करहिं सब प्रीती ॥ १ ॥
बालि त्रास ब्याकुल दिन राती । तन बहु ब्रन चिंताँ जर छाती ॥
सोइ सुग्रीव कीन्ह कपिराऊ । अति कृपाल रघुबीर सुभाऊ ॥ २ ॥
जानतहूँ अस प्रभु परिहरहीं । काहे न बिपति जाल नर परहीं ॥
पुनि सुग्रीवहि लीन्ह बोलाई । बहु प्रकार नृपनीति सिखाई ॥ ३ ॥
कह प्रभु सुनु सुग्रीव हरीसा । पुर न जाउँ दस चारि बरीसा ॥
गत ग्रीषम बरषा रितु आई । रहिहउँ निकट सैल पर छाई ॥ ४ ॥
अंगद सहित करहु तुम्ह राजू । संतत हृदयँ धरेहु मम काजू ॥
जब सुग्रीव भवन फिरि आए । रामु प्रबरषन गिरि पर छाए ॥ ५ ॥

Umā, there is no such friend as Srī Rāma in this world—neither preceptor, nor father, nor mother, nor brother, nor master. Gods, men and sages, all as a rule have some selfish motive behind their love. The same Sugrīva who trembled day and night in fear of Vālī, who had many a sore on his body and whose breast ever burnt with the fire of anxiety, was made the king of monkeys! The Hero of Raghu's line is extremely compassionate by nature. No wonder that men who knowingly abandon such a lord should be caught in the meshes of calamity. The Lord then sent for Sugrīva and instructed him in the various principles of statecraft. Said the Lord, "Listen, O Sugrīva, lord of the monkeys: I may not enter a town for four years and ten. The hot season is now over and the rains have set in. I will, therefore, encamp on the hills not far from you. You and Angada rule over the kingdom, and ever cherish my business in your heart." When Sugrīva returned home, Śrī Rāma took up His abode on the Pravarsana hills.

(1—5)

दो०—प्रथमहिं देवन्ह गिरि गुहा राखेउ रुचिर बनाइ ।
राम कृपानिधि कछु दिन बास करहिंगे आइ ॥ १२ ॥

The gods had already kept ready for Him a charming cave in the mountain in the hope that the all-merciful Śrī Rama would come and stay there for a few days.

(12)

चौ०—सुंदर बन कुसुमित अति सोभा । गुंजत मधुप निकर मधु लोभा ॥
कंद मूल फल पत्र सुहाए । भए बहुत जब ते प्रभु आए ॥ १ ॥
देखि मनोहर सैल अनूपा । रहे तहँ अनुज सहित सुरभूपा ॥
मधुकर खग मृग तनु धरि देवा । करहिं सिद्ध मुनि प्रभु कै सेवा ॥ २ ॥
मंगलरूप भयउ बन तब ते । कीन्ह निवास रमापति जब ते ॥
फटिक सिला अति सुभ्र सुहाई । सुख आसीन तहाँ द्वौ भाई ॥ ३ ॥
कहत अनुज सन कथा अनेका । भगति बिरति नृपनीति बिबेका ॥
बरषा काल मेघ नभ छाए । गरजत लागत परम सुहाए ॥ ४ ॥

The lovely forest, rich in flowers, presented a most splendid sight with its swarms of bees humming in greed of honey. Delightful bulbs, roots, fruits

and leaves grew in abundance from the time the Lord came there. Seeing the mountain incomparable in its charms Śrī Rāma, the suzerain Lord of gods stayed there with His younger brother. Taking the form of bees, birds and beasts, gods, Siddhas and hermits did service to the Lord. The forest became a picture of felicity from the time Śrī Rāma, the Lord of Lakṣmī (the goddess of prosperity), took up His residence there. There was a delightful and glistening rock of crystal, on which the two brothers sat at ease. Śrī Rāma gave a discourse to His younger brother on many a topic such as Devotion, dispassion, statecraft and spiritual wisdom. As the rains had set in, the sky was overcast with clouds, which made a delightful rumbling noise. (1—4)

दो०—लछिमन देखु मोर गन नाचत बारिद पेखि ।
गृही बिरति रत हरष जस बिष्नुभगत कहुँ देखि ॥ १३ ॥

"Look here, Lakṣmaṇa: the peacocks dance at the sight of the clouds, even as a householder having a leaning towards dispassion would rejoice to see a devotee of Bhagavān Viṣṇu. (13)

चौ०—घन घमंड नभ गरजत घोरा । प्रिया हीन डरपत मन मोरा ॥
दामिनि दमक रह न घन माहीं । खल कै प्रीति जथा थिर नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
बरषहिं जलद भूमि निअराएँ । जथा नवहिं बुध बिद्या पाएँ ॥
बूँद अघात सहहिं गिरि कैसें । खल के बचन संत सह जैसें ॥ २ ॥
छुद्र नदीं भरि चलीं तोराई । जस थोरेहुँ धन खल इतराई ॥
भूमि परत भा ढाबर पानी । जनु जीवहि माया लपटानी ॥ ३ ॥
समिटि समिटि जल भरहिं तलावा । जिमि सदगुन सज्जन पहिं आवा ॥
सरिता जल जलनिधि महुँ जाई । होइ अचल जिमि जिव हरि पाई ॥ ४ ॥

"The clouds are fast gathering in the sky and making a terrible noise. Bereft as I am of my darling (Sītā), my heart trembles to see all this. The lightning flashes fitfully amid the clouds, like the friendship of the wicked, which never endures. The pouring clouds cleave close to the ground even as the learned stoop beneath accumulated lore. The mountains endure the buffeting of showers even as a saint would put up with the taunts of the wicked. The swelling streamlets rush with great speed just as the wicked would feel elated even with a small fortune. The water becomes turbid the moment it descends on earth, even as the Jīva (an embodied soul) is enveloped in Māyā as soon as born. The water coming from various directions gathers into a pool even as commendable virtues find their way into the heart of a noble soul. The water of the streams becomes still once it pours into the ocean, just as the ego finds eternal rest on attaining union with Śrī Hari. (1—4)

दो०—हरित भूमि तृन संकुल समुझि परहिं नहिं पंथ ।
जिमि पाखंड बाद तें गुप्त होहिं सदग्रंथ ॥ १४ ॥

"The green earth is so choked with grass that the tracks cannot be distinguished, just as holy books are obscured by heretic doctrines. (14)

चौ०—दादुर धुनि चहु दिसा सुहाई । बेद पढ़हिं जनु बटु समुदाई ॥
नव पल्लव भए बिटप अनेका । साधक मन जस मिलें बिबेका ॥ १ ॥
अर्क जवास पात बिनु भयऊ । जस सुराज खल उद्यम गयऊ ॥
खोजत कतहुँ मिलइ नहिं धूरी । करइ क्रोध जिमि धरमहि दूरी ॥ २ ॥
ससि संपन्न सोह महि कैसी । उपकारी कै संपति जैसी ॥
निसि तम घन खद्योत बिराजा । जनु दंभिन्ह कर मिला समाजा ॥ ३ ॥
महावृष्टि चलि फूटि किआरीं । जिमि सुतंत्र भएँ बिगरहिं नारीं ॥
कृषी निरावहिं चतुर किसाना । जिमि बुध तजहिं मोह मद माना ॥ ४ ॥
देखिअत चक्रबाक खग नाहीं । कलिहि पाइ जिमि धर्म पराहीं ॥
ऊषर बरषइ तृन नहिं जामा । जिमि हरिजन हियँ उपज न कामा ॥ ५ ॥
बिबिध जंतु संकुल महि भ्राजा । प्रजा बाढ़ जिमि पाइ सुराजा ॥
जहँ तहँ रहे पथिक थकि नाना । जिमि इंद्रिय गन उपजें ग्याना ॥ ६ ॥

"On all sides one hears the delightful croaking of frogs, which reminds one of a batch of religious students chanting the Vedas. Clothed with new leaves the trees of different species look as green and cheerful as the mind of a striving soul who has attained spiritual wisdom. The leaves of the Āk and Jawāsā plants have fallen off even as under a good government the plans of the wicked come to naught. Dust cannot be found even if one searches for it, just as piety is scared away by anger. The earth rich with crops appears as delightful as the wealth of a generous man. In the thick darkness of the night fireflies gleam like a mustered band of hypocrites. The embankments of the fields have been breached by torrential rains just as women get spoiled by freedom Clever husbandmen protect their crop by uprooting the weeds, just as the wise discard infatuation, vanity and pride. The Chakrawāka birds are no more to be seen, just as virtues disappear with the Kali age. Even though it rains on the barren lands as well, not a blade of grass sprouts on it, just as concupiscence takes no root in the heart of a servant of Śrī Hari. The earth looks charming with the swarms of various living creatures even as the population grows under a good government. Many a weary traveller has stopped here and there just as with the dawning of wisdom the senses become still. (1—6)

दो०—कबहुँ प्रबल बह मारुत जहँ तहँ मेघ बिलाहिं ।
जिमि कपूत के उपजें कुल सद्धर्म नसाहिं ॥ १५ (क) ॥
कबहुँ दिवस महँ निबिड़ तम कबहुँक प्रगट पतंग ।
बिनसइ उपजइ ग्यान जिमि पाइ कुसंग सुसंग ॥ १५ (ख) ॥

"Sometimes a strong wind would blow and disperse the clouds in various directions, just as with the birth of an unworthy son the noble traditions of a family get extinct. Now it becomes pitch dark even during the day, while at

other times the sun would shine brightly, just as the light of wisdom is obscured in the company of the vile and mainfests itself in the company of the good. (15 A-B)

चौ०—बरषा बिगत सरद रितु आई । लछिमन देखहु परम सुहाई ॥
फूलें कास सकल महि छाई । जनु बरषाँ कृत प्रगट बुढ़ाई ॥ १ ॥
उदित अगस्ति पंथ जल सोषा । जिमि लोभहि सोषइ संतोषा ॥
सरिता सर निर्मल जल सोहा । संत हृदय जस गत मद मोहा ॥ २ ॥
रस रस सूख सरित सर पानी । ममता त्याग करहिं जिमि ग्यानी ॥
जानि सरद रितु खंजन आए । पाइ समय जिमि सुकृत सुहाए ॥ ३ ॥
पंक न रेनु सोह असि धरनी । नीति निपुन नृप कै जसि करनी ॥
जल संकोच बिकल भइँ मीना । अबुध कुटुंबी जिमि धन हीना ॥ ४ ॥
बिनु घन निर्मल सोह अकासा । हरिजन इव परिहरि सब आसा ॥
कहुँ कहुँ बृष्टि सारदी थोरी । कोउ एक पाव भगति जिमि मोरी ॥ ५ ॥

"Look here, Lakṣmaṇa: the rains are over now and the most charming autumn has arrived. The whole earth is covered by the Kāśa grass with its white flowers as if the rainy season has exposed its old age. The constellation known by the name of Agastya (Canopus)* has appeared and dried up the water on the roads even as contentment swallows greed. The limpid water of the rivers and lakes looks charming as a saint's heart devoid of pride and infatuation. Drop by drop the water of the streams and lakes is drying up even as the wise shake off the possessive instinct. Knowing that the autumn had set in the Khañjana bird has made its appearance, just as the welcome fruit of one's meritorious deeds appears at the appointed time (neither sooner nor later). Devoid of mud and dust the earth has assumed a lovely aspect just like the administration of a monarch well-versed in politics. The fish are distressed on account of the diminishing waters even as an improvident householder suffering from want of money. The cloudless sky is shining as bright as a devotee of Śrī Hari, who has abandoned all desires. Here and there we have light autumnal showers, just as a rare soul comes to develop devotion to Me. (1—5)

दो०—चले हरषि तजि नगर नृप तापस बनिक भिखारि ।
जिमि हरिभगति पाइ श्रम तजहिं आश्रमी चारि ॥ १६ ॥

"Kings and ascetics, merchants and mendicants are gladly leaving the city (kings for extending their dominions, ascetics in search of a suitable place for practising penance, merchants for carrying on their trade and mendicants for begging alms), just as men in any of the four stages of life cease to toil (for perfection) once they have acquired devotion to Śrī Hari. (16)

* The heliacal rising of the constellation named above takes place on the seventh day after the new moon of the month of Bhādrapada.

† The four stages of life through which a Brahman in particular and all the twice-born in general have to pass are: (1) Brahmacharya (student life), (2) Gārhasthya (married life), (3) Vānaprastha (asceticism) and (4) Sannyāsa (renunciation).

चौ०—सुखी मीन जे नीर अगाधा। जिमि हरि सरन न एकउ बाधा॥
फूलें कमल सोह सर कैसा। निर्गुन ब्रह्म सगुन भएँ जैसा॥ १॥
गुंजत मधुकर मुखर अनूपा। सुंदर खग रव नाना रूपा॥
चक्रबाक मन दुख निसि पेखी। जिमि दुर्जन पर संपति देखी॥ २॥
चातक रटत तृषा अति ओही। जिमि सुख लहइ न संकरद्रोही॥
सरदातप निसि ससि अपहरई। संत दरस जिमि पातक टरई॥ ३॥
देखि इंदु चकोर समुदाई। चितवहिं जिमि हरिजन हरि पाई॥
मसक दंस बीते हिम त्रासा। जिमि द्विज द्रोह किएँ कुल नासा॥ ४॥

"In deep waters the fish are as happy as ever, just as those who have taken refuge in Śrī Hari (*i.e.*, Myself) never fall into trouble of any kind. With full-blown lotuses the lake appears as charming as when the absolute Brahma appears with form. The bees are making a humming sound which possesses a unique melody of its own, and the birds a charming concert of diverse sounds. The Chakrawāka bird is sad at heart to see the night, just as a villain is grieved at the sight of another's fortune. The Chātaka cries out in its agony of excessive thirst just as an enemy of Śankara knows no rest. The moon by night relieves the heat of the autumnal sun, just as the sight of a holy man drives away sin. Flocks of Chakora birds fix their gaze on the moon as soon as she comes to their view, even as the votaries of Śrī Hari on meeting Him. Mosquitoes and gadflies have perished due to fear of cold, just as hostility to the Brahmans brings ruin to the entire family. (1—4)

दो०—भूमि जीव संकुल रहे गए सरद रितु पाइ।
सदगुर मिलें जाहिं जिमि संसय भ्रम समुदाइ॥ १७॥

"The insects that teemed on the earth have perished with the advent of the autumn, just as a man who has found a teacher in the real sense of the term is rid of all doubt and error. (17)

चौ०—बरषा गत निर्मल रितु आई। सुधि न तात सीता कै पाई॥
एक बार कैसेहुँ सुधि जानौं। कालहु जीति निमिष महुँ आनौं॥ १॥
कतहुँ रहउ जौं जीवति होई। तात जतन करि आनउँ सोई॥
सुग्रीवहुँ सुधि मोरि बिसारी। पावा राज कोस पुर नारी॥ २॥
जेहिं सायक मारा मैं बाली। तेहिं सर हतौं मूढ़ कहँ काली॥
जासु कृपाँ छूटहिं मद मोहा। ता कहुँ उमा कि सपनेहुँ कोहा॥ ३॥
जानहिं यह चरित्र मुनि ग्यानी। जिन्ह रघुबीर चरन रति मानी॥
लछिमन क्रोधवंत प्रभु जाना। धनुष चढ़ाइ गहे कर बाना॥ ४॥

"The rains are over and the autumn, which is marked by a cloudless sky and limpid waters, has arrived; yet, dear brother, we have received no news about Sītā. If only once I could anyhow come to know of her whereabouts I would recover her out of the hands of Death himself. Wherever she may

be, if only she is still alive I would make an effort to rescue her, dear brother. Sugrīva too has forgotten me now that he has got a kingdom, a treasury, the amenities of city life and his own spouse. I will shoot the fool tomorrow with the same arrow which I used in killing Vālī." (Says Śankara) He whose very grace rids one of pride and infatuation, could He ever dream of being angry, Umā ? Those enlightened sages alone who have conceived a love for the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's race) can know the inwardness of this conduct of His. When Lakṣmaṇa found the Lord angry, he strung his bow and took arrows in his hands. (1—4)

दो०—तब अनुजहि समुझावा रघुपति करुना सींव ।
भय देखाइ लै आवहु तात सखा सुग्रीव ॥ १८ ॥

The Lord of Raghus, who was the highest embodiment of compassion, then instructed His younger brother saying, "Sugrīva is our friend, dear brother; you should only frighten him and bring him here." (18)

चौ०—इहाँ पवनसुत हृदयँ बिचारा । राम काजु सुग्रीवँ बिसारा ॥
निकट जाइ चरनन्हि सिरु नावा । चारिहु बिधि तेहि कहि समुझावा ॥ १ ॥
सुनि सुग्रीवँ परम भय माना । बिषयँ मोर हरि लीन्हेउ ग्याना ॥
अब मारुतसुत दूत समूहा । पठवहु जहँ तहँ बानर जूहा ॥ २ ॥
कहहु पाख महुँ आव न जोई । मोरें कर ता कर बध होई ॥
तब हनुमंत बोलाए दूता । सब कर करि सनमान बहूता ॥ ३ ॥
भय अरु प्रीति नीति देखराई । चले सकल चरनन्हि सिर नाई ॥
एहि अवसर लछिमन पुर आए । क्रोध देखि जहँ तहँ कपि धाए ॥ ४ ॥

There (at Kiṣkindhā) Hanumān, the son of the wind-god, thought to himself, "Sugrīva has forgotten the task entrusted to him by Śrī Rāma." Approaching Sugrīva, therefore, he bowed his head at his feet and tried to bring him round by employing all the four methods of persuasion*. Sugrīva felt much alarmed to hear the words of Hanumān. "Sensuality has robbed me of my senses. Now, O son of the wind-god, troops of monkeys are scattered here and there: send batches of messengers to them and have it proclaimed that anyone who fails to appear before me within a fortnight shall meet his death at my hands." Thereupon Hanumān sent for envoys and receiving them most politely charged them with their duty making use of threats blandishments and persuasion. They all bowed their head at his feet and proceeded on their journey. That very moment Lakṣmaṇa entered the city; seeing him angry monkeys ran away helter-skelter. (1—4)

---

* The four recognized methods of persuasion are:—(1) Sāma (argument or expostulation), (2) Dāna (inducement in the shape of gift etc.), (3) Bheda (sowing seeds of dissension) and (4) Daṇḍa (use of force). Hanumān must have told Sugrīva that apart from (1) moral obligations towards a friend and ally, (2) he owed his all to the grace of Śrī Rāma and was thus in duty bound to return His services, (3) that as a warrior he was no match for Śrī Rāma, who could punish him even as He did Vāli, and (4) that He could win over Angada to His side and use him as a tool in dethroning Sugrīva.

दो०—धनुष चढ़ाइ कहा तब जारि करउँ पुर छार ।
ब्याकुल नगर देखि तब आयउ बालिकुमार ॥ १९ ॥

Lakṣmaṇa then strung his bow and said, "I will burn the city to ashes (by making use of the Agni-astra)." Thereupon came Vālī's son (prince Angada), seeing the whole city in dismay. (19)

चौ०—चरन नाइ सिरु बिनती कीन्ही । लछिमन अभय बाँह तेहि दीन्ही ॥
क्रोधवंत लछिमन सुनि काना । कह कपीस अति भयँ अकुलाना ॥ १ ॥
सुनु हनुमंत संग लै तारा । करि बिनती समुझाउ कुमारा ॥
तारा सहित जाइ हनुमाना । चरन बंदि प्रभु सुजस बखाना ॥ २ ॥
करि बिनती मंदिर लै आए । चरन पखारि पलँग बैठाए ॥
तब कपीस चरनन्हि सिरु नावा । गहि भुज लछिमन कंठ लगावा ॥ ३ ॥
नाथ बिषय सम मद कछु नाहीं । मुनि मन मोह करइ छन माहीं ॥
सुनत बिनीत बचन सुख पावा । लछिमन तेहि बहुबिधि समुझावा ॥ ४ ॥
पवन तनय सब कथा सुनाई । जेहि बिधि गए दूत समुदाई ॥ ५ ॥

He bowed his head at Lakṣmaṇa's feet and made humble petition to him, whereupon Lakṣmaṇa extended to him his protecting arms. When the report of Lakṣmaṇa's wrath reached the ears of the monkey lord (King Sugrīva), he was terribly distracted with fear and said, "Listen, Hanumān: take Tārā with you and with suppliant prayers appease the prince (Lakṣmaṇa)." Hanumān accordingly went with Queen Tārā and bowing at Lakṣmaṇa's feet recounted the Lord's glory. With much supplication he escorted the prince to the palace and after laving his feet seated him on a couch. Then the monkey lord (Sugrīva) bowed his head at the prince's feet, while Lakṣmaṇa took him by the arm and hugged him. "There is nothing so intoxicating, my lord, as the pleasures of sense, which in an instant infatuate the soul even of a sage." Lakṣmaṇa was gratified to hear his humble speech and reassured him in many ways. The son of the wind-god told him all that had happened in the meantime, viz., how batches of spies had been despatched (in various directions). (1—5)

दो०—हरषि चले सुग्रीव तब अंगदादि कपि साथ ।
रामानुज आगें करि आए जहँ रघुनाथ ॥ २० ॥

Accompanied by Angada and other monkeys and placing Śrī Rāma's younger brother at the head, King Sugrīva went forth with joy and arrived in Śrī Rāma's presence. (20)

चौ०—नाइ चरन सिरु कह कर जोरी । नाथ मोहि कछु नाहिन खोरी ॥
अतिसय प्रबल देव तव माया । छूटइ राम करहु जौं दाया ॥ १ ॥
बिषय बस्य सुर नर मुनि स्वामी । मैं पावँर पसु कपि अति कामी ॥
नारि नयन सर जाहि न लागा । घोर क्रोध तम निसि जो जागा ॥ २ ॥

लोभ पाँस जेहिं गर न बँधाया । सो नर तुम्ह समान रघुराया ॥
यह गुन साधन तें नहिं होई । तुम्हरी कृपाँ पाव कोइ कोई ॥ ३ ॥
तब रघुपति बोले मुसुकाई । तुम्ह प्रिय मोहि भरत जिमि भाई ॥
अब सोइ जतनु करहु मन लाई । जेहि बिधि सीता कै सुधि पाई ॥ ४ ॥

Bowing his head at Śrī Rāma's feet he exclaimed with joined palms, "My lord, I am not at all to blame (for what I have done). Exceedingly powerful, O Lord, is Your Māyā (deluding potency), which withdraws itself only when You, O Rāma, show Your grace to a Jīva. Gods, men and sages, my master, are all slaves of their senses; while I am a vile brute and a monkey, the most libidinous of animals. A man who is not pierced by the shaft of a woman's glances, nay, who remains wakeful even in the dark night of anger (who is not swayed by passion) and who is never caught in the meshes of greed, is as good as Yourself, O Lord of Raghus. It is a virtue which cannot be attained by personal endeavour; it is only by Your grace that one here and one there can acquire it." Thereupon the Lord of Raghus smiled and said, "Brother, you are dear to me as Bharata. Now with all your heart make some organized effort whereby we may get tidings of Sītā."

(1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि होत बतकही आए बानर जूथ ।
नाना बरन सकल दिसि देखिअ कीस बरूथ ॥ २१ ॥

While a talk was thus going on between them, multitudes of monkeys arrived. Legions of monkeys of various colours were visible in all the quarters. (21)

चौ०—बानर कटक उमा मैं देखा । सो मूरुख जो करन चह लेखा ॥
आइ राम पद नावहिं माथा । निरखि बदनु सब होहिं सनाथा ॥ १ ॥
अस कपि एक न सेना माहीं । राम कुसल जेहि पूछी नाहीं ॥
यह कछु नहिं प्रभु कइ अधिकाई । बिस्वरूप ब्यापक रघुराई ॥ २ ॥
ठाढ़े जहँ तहँ आयसु पाई । कह सुग्रीव सबहि समुझाई ॥
राम काजु अरु मोर निहोरा । बानर जूथ जाहु चहुँ ओरा ॥ ३ ॥
जनकसुता कहुँ खोजहु जाई । मास दिवस महँ आएहु भाई ॥
अवधि मेटि जो बिनु सुधि पाएँ । आवइ बनिहि सो मोहि मराएँ ॥ ४ ॥

(Says Śankara:) I saw the army of monkeys, Umā; he is indeed a fool who would try to count them. They came and bowed their head at Śrī Rāma's feet and found their true lord in Him when they gazed on His countenance. In the whole host there was no monkey whose welfare Śrī Rāma did not personally enquire. This was no miracle for my master, the Lord of Raghus, who has taken all forms and is omnipresent. They stood in martial array as ordered and King Sugrīva thus instructed them all: "I exhort and commission you to do Śrī Rāma's work. Therefore, O monkey hosts, go forth in every direction and institute a search for Janaka's Daughter;

but you should all return in course of a month, my brethren. He who returns beyond this limit without any news shall meet his death at my hands." (1–4)

दो०—बचन सुनत सब बानर जहँ तहँ चले तुरंत ।
तब सुग्रीवँ बोलाए अंगद नल हनुमंत ॥ २२ ॥

On hearing his command the monkeys proceeded at once in various directions. Sugrīva then called Angada, Nala and Hanumān. (22)

चौ०—सुनहु नील अंगद हनुमाना । जामवंत मतिधीर सुजाना ॥
सकल सुभट मिलि दच्छिन जाहू । सीता सुधि पूँछेहु सब काहू ॥ १ ॥
मन क्रम बचन सो जतन बिचारेहु । रामचंद्र कर काजु सँवारेहु ॥
भानु पीठि सेइअ उर आगी । स्वामिहि सर्ब भाव छल त्यागी ॥ २ ॥
तजि माया सेइअ परलोका । मिटहिं सकल भवसंभव सोका ॥
देह धरे कर यह फलु भाई । भजिअ राम सब काम बिहाई ॥ ३ ॥
सोइ गुनग्य सोई बड़भागी । जो रघुबीर चरन अनुरागी ॥
आयसु मागि चरन सिरु नाई । चले हरषि सुमिरत रघुराई ॥ ४ ॥
पाछें पवन तनय सिरु नावा । जानि काज प्रभु निकट बोलावा ॥
परसा सीस सरोरुह पानी । करमुद्रिका दीन्हि जन जानी ॥ ५ ॥
बहु प्रकार सीतहि समुझाएहु । कहि बल बिरह बेगि तुम्ह आएहु ॥
हनुमत जन्म सुफल करि माना । चलेउ हृदयँ धरि कृपानिधाना ॥ ६ ॥
जद्यपि प्रभु जानत सब बाता । राजनीति राखत सुरत्राता ॥ ७ ॥

"Listen, O Nīla, Angada, Hanumān and Jāmbavān: you are all resolute of mind and wise. Proceed all of you, gallant warriors, together to the south and enquire of everyone you meet the whereabouts of Sītā. Use every faculty of yours to devise some means of tracing Her and thereby accomplish the object of Śrī Rāmachandra. (For warming oneself) one should wait upon the sun turning one's back towards the same, while fire should be waited upon turning one's breast towards it; but a master must be served with one's whole being (in thought, word and deed) without resorting to any wiles. Similarly one should strive for (lasting happiness in) the other world by discarding the unrealities of the world. In this way all one's woes incident to birth and death are eradicated. The consummation of human birth, brethren, lies in worshipping Śrī Rāma in a disinterested spirit. He is verily a man of flair and he alone is highly blessed, who is enamoured of Śrī Rāma's feet." Taking leave of Sugrīva and bowing their head at his feet they joyously set out with their thoughts fixed on the Lord of Raghus. The last to make obeisance was Hanumān, (the son of the wind-god). The Lord knew that His work was going to be accomplished by him and therefore called him near. He stroked his head with His lotus hand and recognizing him to be His devotee gave him the ring off His finger. "Comfort Sītā in various ways

and return quickly after telling Her of my might and the agony of my heart due to separation from Her." Hanumān felt that he had reaped the reward of his birth and departed with the image of the All-merciful enshrined in his heart. Although the Lord knew everything, the Protector of the gods respected the recognized principles of statecraft (by sending spies in the first instance to trace out His lost spouse). (1—7)

दो०—चले सकल बन खोजत सरिता सर गिरि खोह ।
राम काज लयलीन मन बिसरा तन कर छोह ॥ २३ ॥

All the monkeys set forth ransacking woods, streams, lakes, hills and ravines with their mind wholly devoted to Śrī Rāma's business and shaking off all attachment to their body. (23)

चौ०—कतहुँ होइ निसिचर सैं भेटा । प्रान लेहिं एक एक चपेटा ॥
बहु प्रकार गिरि कानन हेरहिं । कोउ मुनि मिलइ ताहि सब घेरहिं ॥ १ ॥
लागि तृषा अतिसय अकुलाने । मिलइ न जल घन गहन भुलाने ॥
मन हनुमान कीन्ह अनुमाना । मरन चहत सब बिनु जल पाना ॥ २ ॥
चढ़ि गिरि सिखर चहूँ दिसि देखा । भूमि बिबर एक कौतुक पेखा ॥
चक्रबाक बक हंस उड़ाहीं । बहुतक खग प्रबिसहिं तेहि माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
गिरि ते उतरि पवनसुत आवा । सब कहुँ लै सोइ बिबर देखावा ॥
आगें कै हनुमंतहि लीन्हा । पैठे बिबर बिलंबु न कीन्हा ॥ ४ ॥

If at any place they came across some demon they would take his life by a single slap. They looked into every recess of forest and hill and if they met any hermit they would all surround him. Presently they felt much oppressed with thirst; but water could be found nowhere and they also lost their way in the dense forest. Hanuman thought to himself that without water to drink all would die. Climbing a hill-top he looked all round and noticing a cavity in the ground saw a strange phenomenon there. Chakrawākas, herons and swans hovered at its mouth and a number of other birds were making their way into it. Coming down the hill Hanumān (the son of the wind-god) took them all and showed them the cavern. They placed Hanuman at their head and entered the cave without further loss of time. (1—4)

दो०—दीख जाइ उपबन बर सर बिगसित बहु कंज ।
मंदिर एक रुचिर तहँ बैठि नारि तप पुंज ॥ २४ ॥

Going further they saw a lovely garden and a lake with many full-blown lotuses. There stood a beautiful temple close by, where sat a woman who was austerity incarnate. (24)

चौ०—दूरि ते ताहि सबन्हि सिरु नावा । पूछें निज बृत्तांत सुनावा ॥
तेहिं तब कहा करहु जल पाना । खाहु सुरस सुंदर फल नाना ॥ १ ॥

मज्जनु कीन्ह मधुर फल खाए । तासु निकट पुनि सब चलि आए ॥
तेहिं सब आपनि कथा सुनाई । मैं अब जाब जहाँ रघुराई ॥ २ ॥
मूदहु नयन बिबर तजि जाहू । पैहहु सीतहि जनि पछिताहू ॥
नयन मूदि पुनि देखहिं बीरा । ठाढ़े सकल सिंधु कें तीरा ॥ ३ ॥
सो पुनि गई जहाँ रघुनाथा । जाइ कमल पद नाएसि माथा ॥
नाना भाँति बिनय तेहिं कीन्ही । अनपायनी भगति प्रभु दीन्ही ॥ ४ ॥

From a distance all bowed their head to her and in response to her enquiry told her all about themselves. She then said, "Go and drink water and partake of beautiful and luscious fruits of various kinds." They bathed and took some delicious fruits and all came once more to her. She related to them her own story from the beginning to the end and added, "I will now go and see the Lord of Raghus. Close your eyes and you will find yourself outside the cavern. You shall find Sītā; you need not feel remorse." The champions closed their eyes and looking again they found themselves standing on the sea-shore. She on her part went to the Lord of Raghus and drawing near to Him bowed her head at His lotus feet. She made supplication in diverse ways and the Lord granted to her unceasing Devotion. (1–4)

दो०—बदरीबन कहुँ सो गई प्रभु अग्या धरि सीस ।
उर धरि राम चरन जुग जे बंदत अज ईस ॥ २५ ॥

Bowing to the Lord's command she left for the forest of Badarīnātha (in the Himalayas), cherishing in her heart Śrī Rāma's feet, that are adored by the unborn Brahmā as well as by Lord Śaṅkara. (25)

चौ०—इहाँ बिचारहिं कपि मन माहीं । बीती अवधि काज कछु नाहीं ॥
सब मिलि कहहिं परस्पर बाता । बिनु सुधि लएँ करब का भ्राता ॥ १ ॥
कह अंगद लोचन भरि बारी । दुहुँ प्रकार भइ मृत्यु हमारी ॥
इहाँ न सुधि सीता कै पाई । उहाँ गएँ मारिहि कपिराई ॥ २ ॥
पिता बधे पर मारत मोही । राखा राम निहोर न ओही ॥
पुनि पुनि अंगद कह सब पाहीं । मरन भयउ कछु संसय नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
अंगद बचन सुनत कपि बीरा । बोलि न सकहिं नयन बह नीरा ॥
छन एक सोच मगन होइ रहे । पुनि अस बचन कहत सब भए ॥ ४ ॥
हम सीता कै सुधि लीन्हें बिना । नहिं जैहैं जुबराज प्रबीना ॥
अस कहि लवन सिंधु तट जाई । बैठे कपि सब दर्भ डसाई ॥ ५ ॥
जामवंत अंगद दुख देखी । कहीं कथा उपदेस बिसेषी ॥
तात राम कहुँ नर जानि मानहु । निर्गुन ब्रह्म अजित अज जानहु ॥ ६ ॥
हम सब सेवक अति बड़भागी । संतत सगुन ब्रह्म अनुरागी ॥ ७ ॥

On this side (standing on the sea-coast) the monkeys thought to themselves, "The time-limit (fixed by Sugrīva) has expired, yet nothing has been done." Sitting together they all said to one another, "Without obtaining

any news (about Sītā) what shall we gain by returning to Kiṣkindhā either?" Said Angada with eyes full of tears, "It is death for us both ways.* Here we have failed to get tidings of Sītā and if we go home King Sugrīva (the lord of monkeys) will behead us. He would have finished me immediately my father was killed, had not Śrī Rāma protected me; hence I owe no gratitude to him." Again and again Angada told them all, "Our death has arrived: there is no doubt about it." When the monkey chiefs heard Angada's words, they could make no answer and tears rolled from their eyes. For a moment they remained plunged in sorrow; but at last they spoke as follows: "We are not going to return without obtaining Sītā's news, O sagacious prince!" So saying all the monkeys went to the sea-shore and spreading Kuśa grass there squatted on it. Seeing Angada's distress Jāmbavān (the old bear chief) gave a highly instructive discourse. "Imagine not Rāma to be a mortal, dear child; know Him to be the same as Brahma (the Supreme Spirit) without attributes, invincible and unborn. We, His servants, are all highly blessed in that we are ever devoted to the same Brahma endowed with a qualified form.

(1—7)

दो०—निज इच्छाँ प्रभु अवतरइ सुर महि गो द्विज लागि।
सगुन उपासक संग तहँ रहहिं मोच्छ सब त्यागि ॥ २६ ॥

"Of His own free will the Lord descends on earth for the sake of gods, Earth, cows and the Brahmans. Spurning all the varieties of final beatitude† the worshippers of His qualified form (come down and) remain with Him even on earth."

(26)

चौ०—एहि बिधि कथा कहहिं बहु भाँती। गिरि कंदराँ सुनी संपाती ॥
बाहेर होइ देखि बहु कीसा। मोहि अहार दीन्ह जगदीसा ॥ १ ॥
आजु सबहि कहँ भच्छन करऊँ। दिन बहु चले अहार बिनु मरऊँ ॥
कबहुँ न मिल भरि उदर अहारा। आजु दीन्ह बिधि एकहिं बारा ॥ २ ॥
डरपे गीध बचन सुनि काना। अब भा मरन सत्य हम जाना ॥
कपि सब उठे गीध कहँ देखी। जामवंत मन सोच बिसेषी ॥ ३ ॥
कह अंगद बिचारि मन माहीं। धन्य जटायू सम कोउ नाहीं ॥
राम काज कारन तनु त्यागी। हरि पुर गयउ परम बड़भागी ॥ ४ ॥
सुनि खग हरष सोक जुत बानी। आवा निकट कपिन्ह भय मानी ॥
तिन्हहि अभय करि पूछेसि जाई। कथा सकल तिन्ह ताहि सुनाई ॥ ५ ॥
सुनि संपाति बंधु कै करनी। रघुपति महिमा बहुबिधि बरनी ॥ ६ ॥

---

* Failure to do one's allotted duty is worse than death to a hero like Angada. It is in this sense that he speaks of death in either case.

† Our scriptures enumerate as many as six varieties of final beatitude. They are: (1) Sālokya (residence in the abode of the supreme Deity), (2) Sārṣṭi (sharing the powers, enjoyments and splendour of the Deity), (3) Sāmīpya (close proximity to the Deity in Heaven), (4) Sārūpya (possessing a form exactly similar to the Deity), (5) Sāyujya (absorption into the Deity) and (6) Identity with the attributeless and formless Brahma (the Absolute).

Thus they discoursed among themselves in many ways. Sampāti* (Jaṭāyu's elder brother) heard them from his cave in the mountain. When he came out of it and saw a host of monkeys, he said to himself, "God has provided me with a feast: I will devour them all today. I have been starving for many days past and have never had a full meal; today God has supplied me with abundant food all at a time." The monkeys trembled with fear to hear the vulture's words. "Our doom is now sealed, we are sure," they said to themselves. All the monkeys rose when they saw the vulture; while Jāmbavān felt much perturbed at heart. Angada reflected within himself and said. "There is no one so blessed as Jaṭāyu, who laid down his life in the service of Śrī Rāma and ascended to the abode of Śrī Hari, supremely lucky as he was." When the bird (Sampāti) heard these words, which stirred in him a mixed feeling of joy and grief, he drew near to the monkeys, who felt alarmed by his presence. Assuring them of safety he went and enquired them about his younger brother and the monkeys told him the whole story. When Sampāti heard of his brother's obsequies (performed by the Lord with His own hands), he glorified the Lord of Raghus in many ways. (1—6)

दो०—मोहि लै जाहु सिंधुतट देउँ तिलांजलि ताहि ।
बचन सहाइ करबि मैं पैहहु खोजहु जाहि ॥ २७ ॥

"Take me to the seashore, so that I may make an offering of water with sesamum seeds (to my departed brother). I can help you only with my instructions, by following which you will succeed in recovering Her whom you seek." (27)

चौ०—अनुज क्रिया करि सागर तीरा । कहि निज कथा सुनहु कपि बीरा ॥
हम द्वौ बंधु प्रथम तरुनाई । गगन गए रबि निकट उड़ाई ॥ १ ॥
तेज न सहि सक सो फिरि आवा । मैं अभिमानी रबि निअरावा ॥
जरे पंख अति तेज अपारा । परेउँ भूमि करि घोर चिकारा ॥ २ ॥
मुनि एक नाम चंद्रमा ओही । लागी दया देखि करि मोही ॥
बहु प्रकार तेहिं ग्यान सुनावा । देह जनित अभिमान छड़ावा ॥ ३ ॥
त्रेताँ ब्रह्म मनुज तनु धरिही । तासु नारि निसिचर पति हरिही ॥
तासु खोज पठइहि प्रभु दूता । तिन्हहि मिलें तैं होब पुनीता ॥ ४ ॥
जमिहहिं पंख करसि जनि चिंता । तिन्हहि देखाइ देहेसु तैं सीता ॥
मुनि कइ गिरा सत्य भइ आजू । सुनि मम बचन करहु प्रभु काजू ॥ ५ ॥

* We learn from *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* and other scriptures that the sage Kaśyapa, the progenitor of gods and demons as well as of the various sub-human species, begot two sons by Vinatā (the mother of the feathered creation)—Aruṇa and Garuḍa by name. Of these Aruṇa serves as the charioteer of the sun-god, while Garuḍa was chosen by Bhagavān Viṣṇu as His own mount. Aruṇa is the father of Sampāti and Jaṭāyu, who thus belonged to the earliest period of the world's history. Their enormous size and uncommon strength, their astounding longevity and their speaking and behaving like human beings will, therefore, cause little wonder when it is remembered that the world has steadily deteriorated since its creation.

गिरि त्रिकूट ऊपर बस लंका । तहँ रह रावन सहज असंका ॥
तहँ असोक उपबन जहँ रहई । सीता बैठि सोच रत अहई ॥ ६ ॥

Having performed the after-death ceremonies in respect of his departed brother (Jaṭāyu) on the seashore Sampātī narrated his own story Listen, O monkey chiefs: in the prime of our youth we two brothers (Jaṭāyu and myself) soared in the heavens and approached the orb of the sun. Jaṭayu could not bear the heat of the sun and came back; but I in my pride advanced nearer the sun. My wings were scorched with the inordinate heat and I fell to the ground with a fearful scream. A sage, Chandramā by name, (who lived there) was moved with compassion when he saw me. He taught me spiritual wisdom in many ways and rid me of my identification with the body. 'In the Trteā age the Supreme Spirit will take the form of a human being and the demon king (Rāvaṇa) will carry off His Spouse. The Lord will send out spies to search Her and you will be absolved of all sins by meeting them. Your wings will sprout again; worry not any longer on that account. You will have to do only this much: show them where Sītā may be.' The sage's prediction has come true today; therefore, follow my instructions and set about the business of your Lord. On the summit of the Trikūṭa hill stands the city of Lankā; Rāvaṇa who is fearless by nature, lives there. There, in the Aśoka garden, is lodged Sītā, who sits there, plunged in grief, even now. (1–6)

दो०—मैं देखउँ तुम्ह नाहीं गीधहि दृष्टि अपार ।
बूढ़ भयउँ न त करतेउँ कछुक सहाय तुम्हार ॥ २८ ॥

"I see Her, though you cannot; for the range of a vulture's sight is unlimited. I have grown old now, or else I would have rendered some help to you. (28)

चौ०—जो नाघइ सत जोजन सागर । करइ सो राम काज मति आगर ॥
मोहि बिलोकि धरहु मन धीरा । राम कृपाँ कस भयउ सरीरा ॥ १ ॥
पापिउ जा कर नाम सुमिरहीं । अति अपार भवसागर तरहीं ॥
तासु दूत तुम्ह तजि कदराई । राम हृदयँ धरि करहु उपाई ॥ २ ॥
अस कहि गरुड़ गीध जब गयऊ । तिन्ह कें मन अति बिसमय भयऊ ॥
निज निज बल सब काहूँ भाषा । पार जाइ कर संसय राखा ॥ ३ ॥
जरठ भयउँ अब कहइ रिछेसा । नहिं तन रहा प्रथम बल लेसा ॥
जबहिं त्रिबिक्रम भए खरारी । तब मैं तरुन रहेउँ बल भारी ॥ ४ ॥

"He who can leap over the ocean having a width of eight hundred miles and is a repository of intelligence will be able to do Śrī Rāma's business. Look at me and take courage in your heart. See how rejuvenated I feel in body (with a new pair of wings) by Śrī Rāma's grace. Even sinners who invoke Śrī Rāma's Name are able to cross the vast and boundless ocean of mundane existence. You, therefore, who are His spies, should never lose nerve but be up and doing with the image of Śrī Rāma enshrined in your heart." So saying, O Garuḍa! (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi) the vulture

departed, leaving them much amazed at heart. Now each one of the monkeys talked of his own strength, but doubted his ability to leap across. Said Jāmbavān (the king of bears), "I am now too old and not a particle of my former strength is left in my body. When Śrī Rāma, the Slayer of the demon Khara, assumed the form of Trivikrama (the Lord with three strides, Lord Vāmana), I was young and possessed great strength. (1—4)

दो०—बलि बाँधत प्रभु बाढ़ेउ सो तनु बरनि न जाइ ।
उभय घरी महँ दीन्हीं सात प्रदच्छिन धाइ ॥ २९ ॥

"In His effort to make Bali captive the Lord grew to an indescribable size. Yet in less than an hour I devoutly ran clockwise around Him as many as seven times." (29)

चौ०—अंगद कहइ जाउँ मैं पारा । जियँ संसय कछु फिरती बारा ॥
जामवंत कह तुम्ह सब लायक । पठइअ किमि सबही कर नायक ॥ १ ॥
कहइ रीछपति सुनु हनुमाना । का चुप साधि रहेहु बलवाना ॥
पवन तनय बल पवन समाना । बुधि बिबेक बिग्यान निधाना ॥ २ ॥
कवन सो काज कठिन जग माहीं । जो नहिं होइ तात तुम्ह पाहीं ॥
राम काज लगि तव अवतारा । सुनतहिं भयउ पर्बताकारा ॥ ३ ॥
कनक बरन तन तेज बिराजा । मानहुँ अपर गिरिन्ह कर राजा ॥
सिंहनाद करि बारहिं बारा । लीलहिं नाघउँ जलनिधि खारा ॥ ४ ॥
सहित सहाय रावनहि मारी । आनउँ इहाँ त्रिकूट उपारी ॥
जामवंत मैं पूँछउँ तोही । उचित सिखावनु दीजहु मोही ॥ ५ ॥
एतना करहु तात तुम्ह जाई । सीतहि देखि कहहु सुधि आई ॥
तब निज भुज बल राजिवनैना । कौतुक लागि संग कपि सेना ॥ ६ ॥

Said Angada, "I will leap across; but I have some diffidence in my heart about my getting back." Jāmbavān, however, interposed, "Even though you are competent in every way, how can we send you, the leader of us all ?" The king of bears then turned towards Hanumān: "Listen, O mighty Hanumān: how is it that you are keeping mum ? A son of the wind-god, you are as strong as your father and are a storehouse of intelligence, discretion and spiritual wisdom. What undertaking in this world is too difficult for you to accomplish, dear child ? It is for the service of Śrī Rāma that you have come down upon earth." The moment Hanumān heard these words he grew to the size of a mountain, with a body shining as gold and full of splendour as though he was another king of mountains (Sumeru). Roaring again and again like a lion he said, "I can easily spring across the salt ocean and killing Rāvaṇa with all his army can uproot the Trikūṭa hill and bring it here. But I ask you, Jāmbavān: kindly tender me suitable advice." "All that you have to do, my son, is to go and see Sītā and come back with Her tidings. Then the lotus-eyed Śrī Rāma will recover Her by the strength of His arm taking with Him a host of monkeys for mere sport. (1—6)

छं०—कपि सेन संग सँघारि निसिचर. रामु सीतहि आनिहैं ।
त्रैलोक पावन सुजसु सुर मुनि नारदादि बखानिहैं ॥
जो सुनत गावत कहत समुझत परम पद नर पावई ।
रघुबीर पद पाथोज मधुकर दास तुलसी गावई ॥

"Taking with Him an army of monkeys Śrī Rāma will exterminate the demons and bring back Sītā; and the gods as well as Nārada and other sages will utter His praises, that sanctify the three spheres. A man who hears, sings, repeats or studies them will attain to the supreme state and Tulasīdāsa, who is devoted like a bee to the lotus feet of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line), ever sings them.

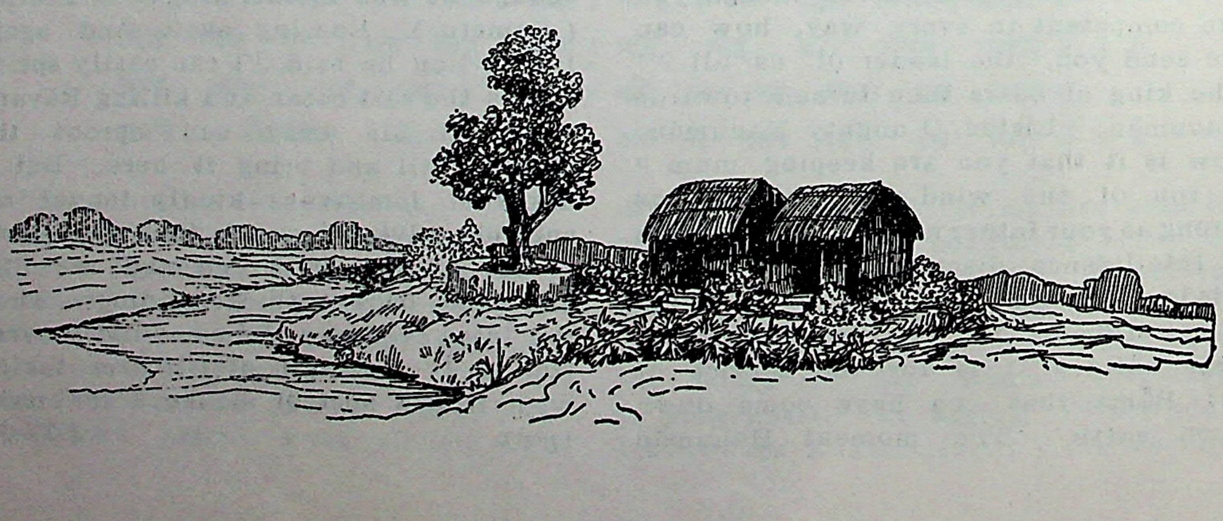
दो०—भव भेषज रघुनाथ जसु सुनहिं जे नर अरु नारि ।
तिन्ह कर सकल मनोरथ सिद्ध करहिं त्रिसिरारि ॥ ३० (क) ॥
सो०—नीलोत्पल तन स्याम काम कोटि सोभा अधिक ।
सुनिअ तासु गुन ग्राम जासु नाम अघ खग बधिक ॥ ३० (ख) ॥

Śrī Rāma, the Slayer of the demon Triśirā, will grant all the desires of those men and women who listen to Śrī Rāma's praises, the remedy for the disease of transmigration. Listen to the praises of Śrī Rāma, who possesses a form dark as the blue lotus, who by His elegance extinguishes millions of Cupids and whose Name is a veritable fowler for birds in the shape of sins. (30 A-B)

[PAUSE 23 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

इति श्रीमद्रामचरितमानसे सकलकलिकलुषविध्वंसने
चतुर्थः सोपानः समाप्तः ।

Thus ends the fourth descent into the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, that eradicates all the impurities of the Kali age.



ॐ

Kalyana-Kalpataru

The Manasa-Number—III

August 1951

Contents

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

Descent V

(Sundarakāṇḍa)

*

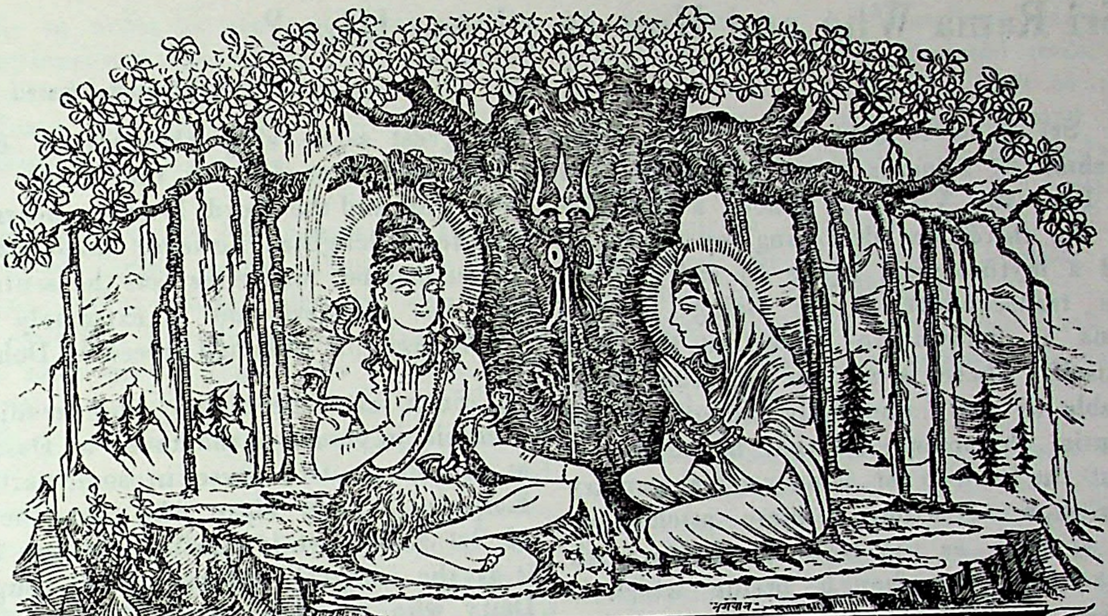
Descent VI

(Lankākāṇḍa)

Descent VII

(Uttarakāṇḍa)

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA KALPATARU

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā* VI. 30)

Vol. XVII] August 1951 [No. 1

गुर्वर्थे त्यक्तराज्यो व्यचरदनुवनं पद्मपद्भ्यां प्रियायाः
पाणिस्पर्शाक्षमाभ्यां मृजितपथरुजो यो हरीन्द्रानुजाभ्याम् ।
वैरूप्याच्छूर्पणख्याः प्रियविरहरुषाऽऽरोपितभ्रूविजृम्भ-
त्रस्ताब्धिर्बद्धसेतुः खलदवदहनः कोसलेन्द्रोऽवतान्नः ॥

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavata* IX. x. 4)

Śrī Rāma relinquished His claim to the throne (of Ayodhyā) in order to redeem His father's pledge and wandered on foot from forest to forest, even though His lotus feet were so tender that even the soft touch of His beloved Consort's hands was too hard for them. When, however, they felt fatigued on account of the tiresome journey, Hanumān and Lakṣmaṇa kneaded them and thus relieved their exhaustion. Angered by the separation from His favourite Spouse, which was occasioned by Śūrpaṇakhā's mutilation, He knitted His eyebrows in such a way that the ocean itself felt dismayed. Bridging the ocean, He then invaded Laṅkā and exterminated the wicked demons even as a forest conflagration consumes a forest. May that Lord of Kosala protect us all!

Sri Rama Who and How to please Him ?

By Hanumanprasad Poddar

Śrī Rāma is held to be the supreme Brahma by some, a manifestation on earth of Bhagavān Viṣṇu by others, a superman by the third, an ideal king by the fourth and a mythological figure by still another. The transcendent divine Being of Śrī Rāma is known to none but the Lord Himself. There is no one in the world capable of truly and fully expounding His essential character. All that has been said about the Lord so far is only a fragmentary description of Him, a mere attempt to hint at Him as the moon is shown with the help of some bough beside which it appears to be though really existing thousands of miles away! Yet it is not untrue. As every particle of the sea is the deep itself, even so whatever has been said about the Lord is His description despite its incompleteness. Viewed from this angle of vision everybody is right in what he says about Him. Bhagavān Śrī Rāma is as well the supreme Brahma, a manifestation on earth of Viṣṇu, a superman, an ideal monarch and a mythological figure too, because the mind that imagines Him to be so derives its existence from the Self, which is identical with the Lord. In fact, the Lord's Being is such that It embraces all; for everything emanates from Him, exists in Him and it is He who pervades all. He is the 'All', the 'All-pervading', the 'Indweller of all hearts'. In reality the Lord's Being as well as His attributes and aspects are incomprehensible, inconceivable and indescribable. The like of Him is nowhere to be found. Hence says the poet:—

"Incomparable as He is, He has no compeer. Śrī Rāma alone is Śrī Rāma's peer,—so declare the Vedas,—even as the sun really suffers diminution by being likened to a myriad glow-worms. So do the great sages sing the praises of Śrī Hari, each according to the flight of his own wits, and the Lord lovingly hears them and feels delighted, however inadequate the praise may be; for He respects the sentiments of His devotees and is extremely kind." (*Uttarakāṇḍa*, Chhanda preceding Dohā 92).

Such was the Lord who manifested Himself in person in the house of Daśaratha at Ayodhyā. Of course in some particular Kalpa it is Lord Viṣṇu who takes the form of Śrī Rāma, while during another Kalpa it is the integral Brahma or the Supreme Deity who manifests Himself as Śrī Rāma. But the point to be remembered here is that Viṣṇu is only a manifestation of the Supreme and hence there is no essential difference between the two. There is difference only in the character of their sports (Līlā).

One might ask: why does the Lord manifest Himself in the world of matter? The answer is that He does so at His own sweet will. As a matter of fact, there is no desire at all in God. It is the desire of His devotees that kindles desire in His heart and accordingly He manifests Himself in our midst. The truth, of course, is that He is birthless and actionless, because He has no merit or demerit attaching to Him. The Jīva or the individual soul gets embodied under compulsion due to the effects of his past actions and not only reaps what he has previously sown but performs new actions as well under the promptings of the accumulated stock of his past Karma that has not yet borne fruit, as well as under the influence of the new surroundings in which he is placed. God does not take birth in the above manner, because He is absolutely free from the effects of His actions, and does not assume

a body in order to reap the fruit of His past actions; and since His actions are purely impersonal they do not bear fruit. He manifests Himself simply to flood the creatures with His grace.

We read in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the Purāṇas and other sacred works that God takes descent under some blessing or curse. For example, Nārada cursed Him to be born as a man. Vṛndā too cursed Him and in order to redeem Jaya and Vijaya Sanaka and his three brothers modified their curse to the effect that they would be united with the Lord after three incarnations, in which they would turn His enemies and be slain by Him. Similarly Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa were blessed by Brahmā with boons which ordained that they would be killed by none else than the Lord Himself. Even so Śrī Rama Himself granted a boon to Manu and Śatarūpā that He would be born as a son to them. There are several other stories well-known to the readers. Nay, we come across in the scriptures even stories telling us that in order to oblige Śūrpaṇakhā the Lord accepted her in the form of Kubjā when He appeared as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Dwāpara age; that in order to gratify the sages of the Daṇḍaka forest He accepted them as Gopīs; and that Vālī's death at the hands of Śrī Rāma was avenged when a fowler struck Śrī Kṛṣṇa with an arrow in the sole of one of His feet. Not one of these stories is fiction. But careful thought will reveal that in the eyes of the world, God voluntarily makes boons and curses and the law of retribution, His excuse for coming into this world. This He does in order to shower His grace upon His devotees and to maintain the standards of morality. Such is the ideal conduct of Him who wants to set up moral standards for the world to follow. As a matter of fact, a curse has no effect on God nor is it incumbent on Him to reap the consequences of any action. A curse or blessing is powerless even against liberated souls, who are never born to reap the fruit of their past actions; for, since a liberated soul never identifies himself with the body nor does he claim the doership of his actions, no merit or demerit attaches to him. Much less can a curse or blessing have any effect on God Himself. It is to bring out this singularity that the birth and actions of God are spoken of as His Sports (Līlā).

There is an anecdote in the *Mahābhārata* which illustrates the truth that God is not subject to any boon or curse. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was returning to Dwārakā after the conclusion of the Mahābhārata war. On the way He came upon the hermitage of a sage, Uttanka by name. Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the hermitage and, in order to respect the laws of propriety, did homage to the sage; and the latter too in his turn politely received Him. In the course of their conversation when the sage came to know that the Mahābhārata war was over and had ended in the extirpation of all the great warriors of the land, he grew angry with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and exclaimed, "Kṛṣṇa ! you could have averted this catastrophe if you pleased. Your nonchalance is responsible for the holocaust in this great war. I am waxing wrath at you and shall accordingly curse you." Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied, "O great sage, you are an ascetic, a devotee of your preceptor; please be tranquil, and know My spiritual essence. Remember: you cannot affront Me. Your curse will be powerless against Me; on the other hand, if you curse Me, your own austerity will be over. You are not aware that what they call real and unreal, manifest and unmanifest, imperishable and perishable, all constitutes My Being. Nay, the real, the unreal, that which is real and unreal both, and finally that which lies beyond the real and the unreal is nothing apart from Me, the eternal Deity

of all deities." On hearing this reply the sage Uttanka extolled Śrī Kṛṣṇa and implored Him to reveal His divine form. Śrī Kṛṣṇa graciously revealed to him His Cosmic Form. The sage was lost in bewilderment at the sight.

One object of God's descent in the world of matter is to take the mortals across the ocean of mundane existence in an easy manner. Appearing in our midst the Lord enacts sports by singing and hearing of which people easily cross the ocean of worldly existence. At the back of even such desire of God it is the desire of His devotees that works. Says the poet:—

"The Glory of Raghu's race, who is a fountain of pure existence, knowledge and bliss, performed actions similar to those of a human being, and which constitute a bridge to cross the ocean of mundane existence." (*Ayodhyā*., 87).

The Lord may appear to take birth or to quit His body like an ordinary mortal; but being eternal, unborn and imperishable, He is, really speaking, neither born nor dies like us mortals. He only appears and disappears. Even as a Yogī reveals and hides himself at will by dint of his Yogic powers, so does God manifest and then withdraw Himself at will with the help of His *Yogamāyā*, who is the same as the Lord Himself. These constitute what may be termed as His birth and death. As a matter of fact, the analogy of a Yogī too does not fit in with Him. His appearing in our midst and vanishing out of sight are both extraordinary in character. The birth and death of Him who is essentially unborn and imperishable are beyond our conception. That is why the Lord Himself says in the *Gītā*, "My birth and activities are divine. He who knows this in reality is not reborn on leaving his body, but comes to Me." How wonderful must be the birth of Him the knowledge even of the real nature of whose birth puts an end to the soul's transmigration !

As regards the Lord's assuming and dropping a body it may be pointed out that in some cases He so behaves that He does not appear to assume or shed the Māyā-made body at all. He draws the curtain on the same form in which He appeared. For example we read in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Bhāgavata* that the Lord manifests Himself in the divine form of a four-armed boy and does not come out of the womb, and that when the time comes He bodily ascends His divine Abode and leaves no remains here. In some cases, however, it so happens that even though He disappears with His divine form, He evolves and leaves behind a Mayic body for the common man to see. It is the dropping of such a body that we find mentioned in works like the *Mahābhārata* and the *Padmapurāṇa*.

Thus it will be wrong to presume that He left behind His gross or physical body and ascended to His realm with His subtle and causal bodies as we do; for the gross, the subtle and the causal bodies exist only in the realm of Avidyā (ignorance). All these three are material sheaths and products of Māyā. These bodies encase those souls alone that are bound by the shackles of Karma from time without beginning, who, in self-oblivion, have identified themselves with the material body and who are steeped in worldliness. Essentially an individual soul too is no other than Truth, Knowledge and Bliss combined. But he fails to realize his character and goes on revolving in the whirligig of births and deaths till he is rid of his identification with the body dating from time without beginning, and of the thraldom of Karma occasioned by the said identification. God, however, is ever beyond Prakṛti (Matter); He has no

identification with any material body nor is He bound by any of His Karmas. Therefore, God's Body does not consist of the three layers or sheaths nor is He endowed with a material mind (Antaḥkaraṇa), nor does He have any ground for egotism or action. The divine Body is nothing but the divine substance; it is eternal, immutable and a sum-total of Knowledge and Bliss. But this secret is known only to the qualified persons—

चिदानंदमय देह तुम्हारी । बिगत बिकार जान अधिकारी ॥

Of course, if the Lord so wills, He can, according to the needs of the occasion, call egotism into being and evolve a body out of His Maya (deluding potency). But such egotism and Maya-made body of the Lord would be only adventitious and intended for sport alone. We can speak of only such a Maya-made body having been cast off by the Lord. A body which is of the same substance as the Lord cannot be discarded. It is eternal, there is no discarding or assuming It; It is beyond the modes of Prakṛti, beyond the mind and the senses, beyond material space and time, immutable, the sum-total of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss, and a product of the Lord's own will—

निज इच्छा निरमित तनु माया गुन गो पार ॥

That is why devotees and the scriptures have spoken of It as consciousness solidified. It is never made nor deteriorates, but remains ever unchanged and purely divine (untainted by Maya).

It is also incorrect to say that the Divine Body is a product of subtle heavenly elements that are directly cognizable by the Yogīs alone. No Yogī or master Yogī can directly cognize the constituents of the Divine Body; really speaking It has no constituent or subtle element other than God Himself. The term "Visuddha-Sattva" (absolute or pure Sattva) is used with reference to It only to indicate His pure divine character. Some people wrongly take 'Visuddha Sattva' to mean Sattva unmixed with 'Rajas' or 'Tamas'. But this is not correct, because nowhere can any one of the three Guṇas born of Prakṛti (Primordial Matter) ever exist without the other two. When one of these Guṇas is in the ascendant, the other two may remain obscure—their operation may not be obtrusively evident; but they never cease to exist. The term 'Viśuddha Sattva', as a matter of fact, is a symbolical expression denoting the Divine Body. The term is sometimes used to signify the perfected body of an adept Yogī. But the body of such a Yogī and the 'Sattva' of which it is made are 'Viśuddha' (pure) only in a relative sense. They are no doubt pure when compared to ours; but they are in no way beyond the realm of Prakṛti, they are as good products of Maya Certainly that body too is comparatively divine and can continue to be ever young and lovely. It is free from old age and disease. Due to a high degree of purity (of its constituents) the body may even emit an unearthly fragrance, so much so that even its excreta may be endowed with an agreeable smell and the body may live to a very long age. The body of some adept Yogī can survive even to the end of creation. But it should be remembered that all this is accomplished through the agency of the material elements alone. Conquest over Prakṛti makes all this possible. Some adept Yogīs are even able to evolve a new body. Such a newly evolved body is only a transformation of a mind of their own making. Though

shaped like a body to all appearance, it is, really speaking, nothing else than the mind. It is through the will-power of the Yogīs that such a Yoga-made body is evolved. But even the Māyā-made body of the Lord cannot be approached by it. It is subject to the Divine will and a product of nothing else than the Lord's own Māyā; hence it possesses peculiar divinity and charm. When the Lord's Māyā-made body is so sublime, what shall we say of His own Body, which is spiritual in substance and constitutes His very Being ?

This should not, however, lead one to believe that the Lord is as good an embodied being as any of us, however sublime or ethereal His body may be, or that, embodied as He is, He can never be formless or attributeless, unmanifest or all-pervading. This is a mystery which few can understand. That is why the poet says:—"The attributeless aspect of the Godhead is easy to understand; but no one can comprehend the embodied Form (which too is really beyond all attributes and divine in character). Even a sage's soul is bewildered on hearing of the various exploits of the Lord, both of an intelligible and baffling character." (*Uttara.*, 73-B).

The essential character of the Lord can be understood only when He graciously enlightens us about it. This requires a considerable amount of self-discipline (Sādhanā). We should reverently cultivate the fellowship of saints enjoying communion with the Lord, hear of His mysterious virtues from the lips of such saints and practise genuine and loving adoration of the Lord; then alone we are able to develop a distaste for worldly enjoyments, conquer our mind and senses and acquire other virtues. Thereafter comes the Knowledge of the formless Brahma aspect of God, which is equally present everywhere. This is followed by the acquisition of Parā Bhakti (Supreme Devotion) or Premā Bhakti (Loving Devotion) to the Lord and then by the grace of God His unthinkable and divinely blissful supreme Reality is correctly known.

No one can explain the reality of God, which is beyond the reach of speech, mind, intellect and all other faculties. But in order to grasp this truth even partially it will be conducive to our good to discuss this subject just by way of an enquiry about God. It is with this idea that we venture to attempt some musing on the subject. God is one without a second, the very embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss combined. It is an absolute truth that nothing exists apart from Him. Being devoid of a Māyā-made form, He is spoken of as 'formless' and, being free from attributes of Māyā, He is declared as 'attributeless'. His 'form' and His 'attributes' are His very Being. That is why though 'eternally formless' and 'eternally attributeless' in the above sense, He is 'eternally embodied' and 'eternally qualified' at the same time, because He is possessed of a form and attributes which constitute His very Being. Of course, this form and attributes of His are identical with Him.

Since His supremely divine Being with form and attributes is not a product of Māyā, it is altogether super-sensuous and hence He is unmanifest. Even in this world of matter there are many supersensuous objects; and when, as a result of continued Sādhana, the senses become pure and, having acquired partial purity, the astral body gets partially disunited from the physical body, our senses too grow subtle and are partially able to perceive those objects which are ordinarily beyond their reach. As one advances on the path of Yogic Sādhanā one's capacity to perceive such super-sensuous objects proportionately goes on increasing. But even on acquiring the power to perceive worldly objects of a supersensu-

ous type one does not get qualified to perceive the Lord. That becomes possible only when the Lord Himself graciously bestows the divine vision.

This should not lead anyone to conclude that the stories that we hear of a number of devotees having been blessed with a vision of God are pure myths. As an act of grace God does manifest His divine form before His devotees and when He does so He divinizes everything thereabout for the time being. The devotee's vision too gets divinized. Of course, the degree of divinity acquired by the devotee's vision differs according to his qualification. During His Avatara or manifestation in the world of matter the Lord keeps Himself veiled by Yogamāyā and His reality can be correctly perceived only where He pulls aside this curtain of His Yogamāyā. This curtain too is not removed to the same degree everywhere. On account of this Yogamaya the Lord's person appears to the people like that of an ordinary mortal and therefore they fail to recognize Him—

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
(*Gītā*, VII.·25)

Thus it will be clear how the supremely divine Being of the Lord, though embodied and qualified, is yet unmanifest. In order to understand the omnipresence of the Lord let us take the example of the sun. There is only one sun; yet it is visible throughout the universe. When the sun, an object of nature, can possess such a virtue, what wonder if one and the same Divinity, who is omnipotent and all-pervading by nature, should shine everywhere. The Lord, however, is playful at the same time. Being eternally absolute and eternally relative at the same time, He is eternally playful as well. His sport never ceases. For carrying on the eternal sport the One manifests Himself in numerous forms suited to the particular sports. All these forms are equally real and eternal. Though diverse, they are ever identical: herein lies the glory of His divinity. The same Lord is the supreme indestructible Brahma, the very embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss; He alone is the omnipresent Oversoul. He is the Cosmic Being (as is well-known, Śrī Rāma showed His cosmic form to Mother Kausalya in His mouth and to Kākabhuśuṇḍi in His belly) and He alone is the Spirit interpenetrating the material world in the form of the Jivātma (the individual soul). He alone is the lower nature (Aparā Prakṛti) and the perishable Adhibhuta or material bodies in the form of the various living beings. He alone is the Karma (or the dynamic principle). He alone is the Hiranmaya Puruṣa (the shining Deity) presiding over the whole universe—Adhidaiva. It is this shining Puruṣa who is known by the names of Sutratma (the soul threaded through the universe), Hiraṇyagarbha (*lit.*, one born of a golden egg) or Brahma. Being the enjoyer and lord of all sacrifices, He alone is the Adhiyajña. He alone is the Regulator of one's inner feelings (Antaryāmī); He alone is the entire universe. He alone is the Lord of the numberless universes, unborn, without beginning, immutable, omnipotent, supremely compassionate, most loving, enjoying supreme lordship, supremely wise and possessed of supreme dispassion, supreme renown, supreme splendour and supreme piety—the Lord possessed of the six divine attributes. It is He who manifests Himself in the various universes in the form of the Triune Godhead—Brahmā, Visnu and Siva, who are but His own part manifestations.

उपजहिं जासु अंस ते नाना । संभु बिरंचि बिष्नु भगवाना ॥
लोक लोक प्रति भिन्न बिधाता । भिन्न बिष्नु सिव मनु दिसित्राता॥

His character is indescribable and unthinkable. It is height of folly, therefore, to wonder how He can be attributeless, formless, unmanifest and omnipresent, though endowed with a Body.

His Body is not perishable or subject to birth as ours; It is everlasting, eternal, supreme, admitting of neither assumption nor rejection, beyond the realm of Prakṛti and supreme bliss personified. The distinction of body and the embodied spirit is absent there: the embodied spirit is no other than the body and the body is no other than the embodied spirit. Though ever residing in His eternal supreme abode, He is present everywhere as the all-pervading Oversoul, is invariably constant as Brahma, is manifest before the devotees as their Deity, and as the individual soul is playing the role of the doer and the enjoyer everywhere. In the forms of Srī Rama and Srī Kṛṣṇa stands manifested the same supreme Deity who sustains all, has taken the form of all, comprises all and is beyond all. He is the integral Brahma, the supreme Brahma and God Himself in person (भगवान् स्वयम्).

Although *Srīmad Bhagavata* speaks of Srī Kṛṣṇa alone as 'God Himself in person' (भगवान् स्वयम्) and refers to all the other manifestations as part manifestations (अंशकलाः) only, the title equally applies to Srī Rama as well. In this connection it should be borne in mind that there are countless universes, in each of which the Lord manifests Himself in different Kalpas. Many a time it is Lord Visnu who takes the form of Srī Rama and Srī Kṛṣṇa. When God Visnu appears as Srī Rama or Srī Kṛṣṇa, His Consort, Lakṣmī, accompanies Him as Sīta or Radha-Rukminī; and when the supreme Lord Himself appears in our midst, His own feminine counterpart, who constitutes His very Self, accompanies Him in person. When Visnu assumes the form of Srī Rama and the supreme Brahma Himself appears as Srī Kṛṣṇa, Srī Kṛṣṇa is spoken of as "God Himself in person" and the other Avatāras referred to as His part manifestations only. And when Lord Viṣṇu takes the form of Srī Kṛṣṇa and the supreme Brahma appears as Srī Rama, the latter is referred to as 'God Himself' in person and the other Avataras are spoken of as part manifestations only. With regard to the supreme Deity manifested as Sri Rama the *Maharamayana* says:—

भरणः पोषणाधारः शरण्यः सर्वव्यापकः ।
करुणः षड्गुणैः पूर्णो रामस्तु भगवान् स्वयम् ॥

"The supporter, the nourisher, the protector of all, all-pervading and compassionate and fully endowed with the six divine attributes (lordship, piety, renown, splendour, wisdom and dispassion), Śrī Rāma is God Himself."

This should not, however, be construed to mean that a manifestation of God Visnu is imperfect in any way. Although He manifests Himself in His entirety at some places and only partially at others, God is integral everywhere. His manifestations vary only in so far as their Līlā is concerned; fundamentally there is no difference.

Even as from the supreme integral Brahma appearing as Srī Rāma emanate a separate Śiva, Brahma and Visnu in each of the numberless universes, so from Sīta, His female counterpart representing His very Self, spring a separate Umā, Ramā and Brahmāṇī (Brahma's consort) in each of the multitudinous universes—

उपजहिं जासु अंस गुन खानी । अगनित उमा रमा ब्रह्मानी ॥

Fundamentally there is no difference between the supreme Brahma, also known as Purusottama or the Highest Person (Sri Rama) and God Visnu. The difference exists only in the sphere of Lila. God Visnu as a member of the divine Triad is manifest in the several universes to carry on His sports separately in each; He is entrusted with the Sattvic function of preservation only. In fact, Brahma, Visnu and Sankara, all the three are manifestations of the supreme Brahma, existing for the

purpose of carrying on their prescribed duties of creation, preservation and annihilation, which correspond with Sattva, Rajas and Tamas respectively. Their duties being restricted to the sphere of their Līlā and therefore sectional, all these deities are regarded as part manifestations only. Though identical in essence, they have numberless forms in the numberless universes, all distinct from one another. That is why Kākabhuśuṇḍi says:—

"Everything I saw had a distinctive stamp of its own universe and was exceedingly wonderful too, O mount of Śrī Hari. But in my round of the numberless universes I saw no other Rāma, my lord." (*Uttara*., 81-A).

It is the supreme Brahma Himself who is manifest in all these forms and it is His energy which operates through them; nay, they do only as much work as has been prescribed for them. It is in order to point out this very fact that the supreme Brahma or the Highest Person in the form of Śrī Rāma has been glorified in the following words, which are absolutely true:—

"......by whose might, O ten-headed monster, Brahmā, Hari (Viṣṇu) and Īśa (Śiva) carry on their respective functions of creation, preservation and destruction... .." (*Sundara*., 20. 3). "He...... .. possesses the creative skill of a myriad Brahmās. Again, He is as good a preserver as a myriad Viṣṇus and as thorough a destroyer as a myriad Rudras." (*Uttara*., 91. 3).

And hence it is that thousands of Brahmās, Viṣṇus and Śankaras, who are part manifestations of Śrī Rāma, the Supreme Brahma, cannot protect His enemy. How can they do so ? An enemy of the Supreme Brahma is virtually an enemy of these three deities themselves; for these latter are absolutely identical with Him. And viewed in the light of the difference in their Līlā, the supreme Brahma is the whole and they are His parts. How can the parts afford shelter to an enemy of the whole ? Hence it is said, "Śankara, Viṣṇu and Brahmā in their thousands are unable to protect you, an enemy of Śrī Rāma." (*Sundara*., 22. 1).

That is why, though really there is no difference between the various manifestations of the Lord, yet, from the point of view of Līlā, the supreme Brahma is undoubtedly superior to the divine Triad.

There is one thing more which deserves our consideration. According to the terminology of Vedānta, the soul identifying itself with the gross, subtle and causal bodies individually is severally known as the Vaiśwānara, the Taijasa and the Prājña; while the Spirit which ensouls their cosmic counterparts severally enjoys the appellations of Viśwa, Hiraṇyagarbha and Īśwara. It is these three aspects of the Universal Spirit that constitute the divine Triad. They all exist within the realm of the three Guṇas (modes of Prakṛti). From the point of view of their functions the three deities (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) are surely referred to as the triune Godhead; but actually they are not beyond Prakṛti. The supreme Divinity, on the other hand, is the 'Suzerain Lord of all the spheres'—'तमीश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरम्'. He is beyond the realm of the three Guṇas, above the distinction of individual and cosmic and is eternally 'everlasting'. In this respect too the supreme Brahma manifested in the form of Śrī Rāma has been recognized as superior to and beyond the divine Triad of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

Now we pass on to a consideration of the limbs of the Lord's Body, which absolutely bear no comparison with our earthly frames. Their shape and form are all most extraordinary, supremely wonderful and delightful—

"Speech is sightless, while the eyes are mute !" (*Bāla*., 228. 1)

How, then, can anyone describe them ? His divine form is sweetness personified. His hands and feet, face and abdomen and all other limbs are Bliss itself—'आनन्दमात्रकरपादमुखोदराद्दिम्'; they are incarnations of the sapor of unmixed joy—'आनन्दैकरसमूर्तयः'. Along with this, His supremely divine love, compassion, lordship, tender affection for His devotees and other innumerable virtues peep in visible form as it were from His various limbs. No one can describe even an infinitesimal part of that divine form. Let alone description, none can even form an idea of it. Even a partial momentary vision of His form not veiled by Yogamāyā sweeps away the ecstasy of absorption into the Absolute and renders the joy of final emancipation insipid. Showering His grace on King Janaka, the divine Śrī Rāma drew aside the curtain of Yogamāyā for a moment only. Janaka, a teacher even of the knowers of Brahma, was enraptured at the sight: tears of joy rushed to his eyes, his voice was choked, he lost control over himself and addressed Viśwāmitra as follows:—

"Tell me, my lord: are these two pretty boys the ornament of a sage's family or the bulwarks of some royal dynasty ? Or is it that Brahma Itself, which the Vedas describe in negative terms such as 'Not that' (Neti), has appeared in a dual form ? My mind, which is dispassion itself in its natural form, is enraptured at their sight even as the Chakora bird is transported with joy at the sight of the moon. Therefore, Sir, I earnestly enquire of you: tell me the truth, my lord; hide nothing from me. Deeply attached to them at their very sight, my mind has perforce renounced the joy of absorption into Brahma." (*Bāla*., 215—1-3).

Janaka's ecstasy of absorption into Brahma withdrew without any effort on his part and he was flooded with rapture at the sight of the embodied Divinity, who is Truth, Knowledge and Bliss personified. When Srī Rāma was about to leave Janaka's capital, King Janaka met Him when He was all by Himself and, joining his palms like a devotee, as if by some reflex action, lovingly uttered the following words:—

"How can I extol you, Rama, sporting as You do in the heart of sages as well as of the great Lord Siva like a swan in the Manasarovar lake. He for whose sake Yogis (those given to contemplation) practise Yoga (mind-control), forswearing anger, infatuation, attachment and pride, the all-pervading Brahma, who is imperceptible and imperishable, the embodiment of Consciousness and Bliss, at once the sum and negation of all attributes, who is beyond the ken of speech and mind, who is past all speculation, but is only inferred by all, and who is the same at all times,—that root of all joy has appeared before my eyes ! Everything is easy of access in this world to a living being when God is propitious." (*Bāla*., 340. 2—4 and 341).

This indicates how supernal and extraordinary is the reality about Śrī Rāma's comeliness of form and His Being.

But this does not mean that He is devoid of limbs like hands and feet. He is endowed with all these; but they are spiritual in substance and exceedingly supernal. Being veiled by Yogamāyā they look like human limbs: this is what constitutes His मायामानुषरूप—His assuming a human semblance through Māya. During the Dipāvalī festival confectioners prepare toy elephants and horses of sugar: in shape they look like elephants and horses. The shape in which they appear is not unreal; it is quite real. But it is wrong to conceive them as consisting of flesh and blood, bones and skin. Similarly, the hands, feet and other limbs that are seen in the Lord's form veiled by Yogamāyā are not false; for they unquestionably

belong to the Lord. Of course they are extremely wondrous and, being veiled by Yogamayā, do not appear in their true perspective but look like those of a human being. It is, however, incorrect to assume that they are made of material skin and bones and, like human limbs, consist of three sheaths, viz., the gross, subtle and causal sheaths. Just as the sugary elephants and horses consist of sugar and sugar alone, in the same way the Lord's form is absolutely, eternally and universally made up of consciousness and bliss alone, of the same substance as the Lord Himself. The Lord's human semblance veiled by Yogamāyā is also known as His Saguṇa form or form with attributes. Of course, this form with attributes is entirely different from His real form, which is at once with and without attributes, and becomes visible only for the sake of Līlā. That is why it is spoken of as 'Mayic' too. This is what is meant by the statement that the attributeless takes a form with attributes due to the love of His devotees (भगत प्रेम बस सगुन सो होई). Otherwise all talk of His *assuming* a form with or without attributes is meaningless; for His real form, which is both with and without attributes, that is to say, possessed of divine attributes that constitute His very Self, is eternal. That thing alone is assumed, which did not exist before. But the divine form of the Lord is eternal.

Bodies can be divided under two main heads—corporeal and incorporeal. All bodies existing in the realm of Prakṛti are corporeal; while those existing in the divine realm of the Spirit, which lies beyond Prakṛti or Matter, are incorporeal The gross, the subtle and the causal—these three sheaths go to constitute the corporeal frame. There is no liberation from this corporeal frame so long as the 'causal' sheath persists. To be rid of this corporeal frame consisting of the three aforementioned sheaths and get established in one's spiritual Self or to get merged in the spiritual forms of the Lord's own associates and companions in the divine realm is what they call Mukti or emancipation. All corporeal frames, whether sprung from copulation or otherwise and whether delivered through the womb or through any other passage are really the outcome of contact of the generative fluid with the female organ of conception. These are of several grades. A body generated by a fluid that flows downwards is of a low order; while that generated by a fluid which has an upward * tendency is of an exalted type. A body which is the result of a lustful sexual act is of the lowest type. If on some particular occasion a man whose fluid has an upward tendency wills the same to flow downwards, the body so generated is of a higher order and belongs to the second grade in an ascending order. A body generated by the sheer will of a man whose generative fluid has an upward tendency, through a mere touch of the hand given on a woman's head, neck, ears, heart or navel is higher still, *i. e.*, of the third grade. Of such bodies, again, the one generated by a touch given on the upper limbs is superior to those procreated by a touch given on the lower limbs. A body begotten by mere sight unaided by touch is still superior; and higher still is the body which is procreated by mere will without the help even of sight. The first two types mentioned above are the result of copulation; while the other three are independent of copulation. Hence the latter are purer than the former two. Bodies are procreated even without a female or male organism. But here too a subtle contact of the generative fluid

* There is a class of Ṛṣis, called Ūrdhvaretās, who have acquired such a wonderful and complete mastery over their sexual instinct that their generative fluid, instead of flowing downwards, rises upwards and is absorbed in their system.

and the conceptive organ is present. The unearthly bodies inhabiting the regions of the spirits, in which the element of air predominates, and those inhabiting the celestial regions, in which the element of fire is predominant, are no less corporeal. The bodies evolved by the Yogis through the power of Yoga or concentration are highly refined; but they too are not beyond the realm of Prakṛti. An incorporeal or immaterial body is quite unlike these; whereas the divine Body, which is no other than the Lord Himself, is altogether indescribable. The truth relating to bodies is a subject deserving a deep study; but its exposition requires a considerable space and time. Its fuller treatment is therefore deferred to a future occasion.

In Śrī *Rāmacharitamānasa* we find Śrī Rāma frequently referred to as Brahma. Now let us investigate the nature of this Brahma. It has been repeatedly submitted that in reality Brahma and Śrī Rāma are identical in essence. But in the *Rāmacharitamānasa* the term 'Brahma' has been used to denote the supreme integral Brahma and not the attributeless Brahma of the Vedāntīs; for the latter is utterly devoid of attributes and a mere manifestation of the Lord. It cannot appear in the world of matter. It is Brahma with attributes alone that appears in our midst, no matter whether it is the integral Brahma or a part thereof, that is, whether it is the supreme Lord Himself or any of His part manifestations, viz., Viṣṇu, Śankara and so on. The Brahma referred to in the *Rāmacharitamānasa* is not only the negation, but an ocean, of attributes as well and it is in these terms that Śrī Rāma has been extolled at various places—

"Hail, Crest-Jewel of kings, incomparable in Your beauty; though transcending Māyā and her attributes, You possess innumerable divine attributes." (*Uttara.*, Chhanda 1 after Doha 12).

This shows that the Brahma that manifests Itself in the world of matter, according to *Śrī Rāmacharitamānasa* is the supreme Lord Himself and He is no other than Śrī Rāmachandra, son of King Daśaratha. It is the same supreme Rāma who having veiled His true nature sports in His human semblance, projected by His Māyā—

"Such is Śrī Rāma, who is devoid of birth, the totality of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, wisdom personified, the home of beauty and strength. He is both pervading and pervaded, fractionless, infinite and integral, the Lord of unfailing power, unqualified, vast, transcending speech as well as the other senses, all-seeing, free from blemish, invincible, unattached, devoid of form, free from error, eternal and untainted by Māyā, beyond the realm of Prakṛti (Matter), bliss personified, the Lord indwelling the heart of all, the actionless Brahma, free from passion and imperishable. In Him error finds no ground to stand upon; can the shades of darkness ever approach the sun ?

"For the sake of His devotees, the divine Lord Śrī Rāma took the form of an earthly king and performed most sacred deeds, befitting an ordinary mortal, even as an actor, while acting on the stage, assumes various guises and exhibits different characters, but himself remains the same." (*Uttara.*, 71.2–4; 72).

From the above description it will be amply clear that Śrī Rāma is the supreme Brahma Himself. It will not be out of place to point out here that the Brahma of the *Brahma-Sūtras*, the integral Brahma or 'Puruṣottama' (the Highest Person) of the *Gītā*, the "Lord Himself" of *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* and "Śrī Rāma" of *Śrī Rāmacharitamānasa* are one and the same reality.

It has already been submitted that the refined bodies of adept Yogīs are immune

from old age and disease etc.; much less can the divine Body be prone to these. Such being the case, it is wrong on the part of some painters to depict the Lord as endowed with a pair of moustaches and beard. The divine Body is ever free from disease, ever in the early teens and in eternal bloom. During His stay in our midst It appears to grow up to an age of sixteen for the sake of Līlā—I say 'appears' because in reality It does not grow. It is outside the curtain of Yogamāyā that Its growth is actually perceived. Beyond the age of sixteen, however, It no longer appears to grow even outside. It ever continues to be in the early teens. It has no beard or moustaches. The dark curly locks on His head ever retain an undiminished charm. The beauty of His countenance is eternally new and appears to be endowed with a unique grace.

Very few blessed souls are able to see the Lord not veiled by Yogamāyā. Even Śiva, Brahmā and other principal deities and the greatest of sages find it most difficult to see the Lord as such. But a vision even of the Lord veiled by Yogamāyā is obtained by great good luck; it is not an ordinary event.

As regards Viṣṇu, Śiva, Brahmā and others, it has already been pointed out that though fundamentally the same as the supreme Deity, they differ from Him in so far as their Līlā is concerned. Śiva and Viṣṇu exist in the various universes as part manifestations of the Lord and also in their basic forms as Mahāśiva and Mahāviṣṇu, who are ever absolutely identical with Him. Brahmā's rank can be attained to even by an individual soul and the position is sometimes held by a part manifestation of the Deity as well. The point to be remembered here is that the Lord is one and only one and that He is wholly distinct from all other forms. The striver who sincerely worships any of these forms eventually attains to the same unthinkable supreme form.

We reproduce below in English some passages from the *Rāmacharitamānasa* bearing on Śrī Rāma's essential character. They can furnish a sufficient clue to His reality. Says Lord Śiva:—

"Śrī Rāma, who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss combined, is like the sun: the night of ignorance cannot subsist in Him even to the smallest degree. He is the Lord whose very being is light: there is no dawn of understanding in His case. (For the dawn presupposes night and night there is none in the sunlight of Śrī Rāma.) Joy and grief, knowledge and ignorance, egoism and pride—these are the characteristics of a Jīva (finite being). Śrī Rāma is the all-pervading Brahma; He is supreme bliss personified, the highest lord and the most ancient Being. The whole world knows it.

"He who is universally known as the Spirit, the fount of light, manifest in all forms, and is the lord of life as well as of matter, that Jewel of Raghu's line is my Master." So saying Śiva bowed his head to Him. (*Bāla.*, 115. 3-4; 116).

Here it may be urged that, according to *Śrī Rāmacharitamānasa* Śrī Rama daily worshipped a newly formed clay symbol of Lord Śiva and He also installed His famous symbol at Rāmeśwara. If Śrī Rāma is the supreme Brahma Himself, and if Lord Siva is His very Self, how did He worship Lord Siva? In this connection it has already been submitted that fundamentally Srī Rāma and Lord Śiva are identical. Let alone Lord Śiva, the whole of this creation, animate as well as inanimate, as a matter of fact, is Śrī Rāma. That is why the poet says at the very beginning of his *Ramacharitamanasa*: "Recognizing the entire creation as full of Sītā and Rāma, I make obeisance to them all with joined palms." (*Bāla.*, 7. 1). And later on Srī Rama Himself tells us that he alone is exclusively

devoted to Him, who feels that he is the servant and that the Lord manifested in the form of the whole animate and inanimate creation is his master." (*Kiṣkindhā*., 3).

As regards Lord Sankara, He has been referred to in the *Ramacharitamanasa* as Srī Rāma's "servant, lord and friend", all in one. According to the *Ramacharitamānasa*, He is exclusively devoted to Srī Rāma, so much so that He renounces Satī on Her assuming the appearance of Sītā. He is Srī Rāma's lord as well, to whom Srī Rāma offers daily worship. He is Srī Rāma's friend too, as is evident from the fact that while accompanying Srī Siva's marriage party to Himavān's house the Lord cuts arious friendly jokes with Him. And, really speaking, the difference exists only in their Līla forms; in their essential character there is no difference at all. The Siva of the Saivites, the Sakti of the Sakti-worshippers, the Mahāvisnu of the Vaishnavites, Śrī Rāma and Srī Kṛṣṇa are all one and the same. No such doubt as has been expressed above should, therefore, be entertained. A Vaishnavite who is a true devotee of Srī Rama beholds his most beloved Lord, Srī Rama, alone as manifest in the whole animate and inanimate creation. He believes that it is his own Rāma who is worshipped here as Siva, there as Sakti and by another class of worshippers as the attributeless Brahma. Nay, it is his Rāma alone who figures as the Allah of the Muslims and the Holy Father of the Christians. There is no supreme Deity other than Srī Rama. It is Srī Rama Himself who, disguised as Śrī Śiva, worships Srī Rama. And it is Srī Rama again who as Srī Rama worships His own Siva form. All these sports are intended only for the spiritual good of the devotees.

भूमौ जले नभसि देवनरासुरेषु
भूतेषु देवि सकलेषु चराचरेषु ।
पश्यन्ति शुद्धमनसा खलु रामरूपं
रामस्य वै भुवितले समुपासकाश्च ॥

"The worshippers of Srī Rāma on earth, O good lady, behold with their pure mind the form of Srī Rama on land, in water as well as in the air, and likewise in gods, human beings and demons, nay, in all animate and inanimate beings."—

"Umā, (says Sankara,) they who are devoted to Śrī Rāma's feet and are free from lust, vanity and anger look upon the whole world as full of their lord; against whom can they harbour animosity ?" (*Uttara*., 112-B)

Now, let us see what are the means of earning the pleasure of Śrī Rāma. This question has been answered in the *Rāmacharitamānasa* at various places. We quote below a few utterances on this point. Mother Pārvatī says to Lord Śiva :—

"Listen, O Slayer of demon Tripura: among a thousand men there is scarce one who is steadfast in his vow of piety. Among a myriad souls devoted to religion there may be one who is averse to the pleasures of sense and takes delight in dispassion. Among a myriad souls free from worldly attachment, so declare the Vedas, scarce one succeeds in acquiring perfect wisdom. Among a myriad enlightened souls in this world there is hardly one who attains final beatitude even when living. Among a thousand such souls he who has not only realized his oneness with Brahma but has also merged his identity in the Absolute and has accordingly become a fountain of all joy is rarely to be found. Of the religious, the unattached, the enlightened and the emancipated, as well as of those merged in the Absolute, O lord of divinities, he who takes delight in devotion to Śrī Rāma and is free from vanity and wiles is most difficult to find." (*Uttara*., 53. 1—4).

Says Kākabhuśuṇḍi:—

"They who knowingly cast aside such Devotion and take pains to acquire mere wisdom are fools who would leave alone the cow of plenty at their own house and knock about in search of the milk-weed to get milk out of it. Listen, O lord of the winged creatures: the fools who ignore Bhakti and seek happiness by any other means stupidly hope to swim across the ocean without the help of a vessel." (*Uttara.*, 114. 1-2).

After pointing out the ruggedness of the path of Knowledge while describing the lamp of wisdom, Kākabhuśuṇḍi says again:—

"The beautiful wish-yielding gem of Devotion to Śrī Rāma is an embodiment of supreme effulgence, which sheds its radiance day and night, requiring neither a vessel nor clarified butter nor a wick (to light it). He in whose heart, O Garuḍa, such a jewel abides is not haunted by poverty in the shape of infatuation. No blast of greed can ever extinguish this light, which dispels the overpowering gloom of ignorance and the swarms of moths (in the shape of vanity etc.) keep away from it in a mood of frustration. Nay, vicious propensities like lust dare not approach him in whose heart the gem of Devotion abides. For him venom is converted into ambrosia and enemies turn into friends; nobody can attain (lasting) happiness without this jewel. Again, he is not affected by the terrible mental diseases from which all beings are grievously suffering. He in whose heart the gem of Devotion to Śrī Hari abides cannot undergo the least suffering even in a dream. They alone are paragons of wisdom in this world, who spare no pains to secure this gem." (*Uttara.*, 119. 1—5).

"In the Kali age, however, men reach the end of mundane existence simply by singing Śrī Hari's praises. In the age of Kali neither Yoga (concentration of mind) nor the performance of sacrifices nor spiritual wisdom is of any avail; one's only hope lies in hymning Śrī Rāma's praises. Giving up all other hopes, whosoever worships Śrī Rāma and fondly chants His praises undoubtedly crosses the ocean of transmigration. The power of the Name is thus manifest in the age of Kali." (*Uttara.*, 102. 2-4)

Lastly, we reproduce below Śrī Rāma's own conclusion on the subject:—

"Now listen to My most sacred teaching, which is not only true and easily intelligible but has also been echoed by the Vedas and other scriptures. I give you to hear My own conclusion; listen to it and imprint it on your mind and, forswearing everything else, worship Me. This world with all its varieties of life, both moving and motionless, is a creation of My Māyā (delusive potency). I love them all, because all are My creatures. But human beings are the dearest to Me of all. Of human beings, the Brahmans; of the Brahmans, those well-versed in the Vedas; of these again, those that follow the course of conduct prescribed in the Vedas; of these latter, those who are averse to the pleasures of sense are dear to Me, and yet more the wise; of the wise too I love a man of realization all the more; more beloved to Me even than these is My own servant (devotee), who solely depends on Me and has no other hope. Again and again I repeat to you the truth that no one is so dear to Me as My devotee. If Virañchi (the Creator) too had no devotion to Me, he would be only as dear to Me as all other creatures. And the humblest creature that breathes, if possessed of Devotion, is dear to Me as life; such is My nature.

"Tell Me, who would not love a faithful, amiable and sagacious servant?

Listen attentively, O Kakabhusundi: the Vedas and Purāṇas declare this to be a sound principle:

"A father has a number of sons, each differing from the others in character, temper and conduct. One is learned, another given to austerities, a third spiritually enlightened, a fourth rich, a fifth possessed of valour, a sixth charitably disposed, a seventh all wise and an eighth intent on piety; but the father equally loves all. A ninth son is devoted to his father in thought, word and deed and never dreams of any other duty. This is the son whom the father loves as his own life, though he be a perfect ignoramus. In a like manner all animate and inanimate beings, including the sub-human species, gods, men and demons,— in short, the whole of this universe is My creation and I am equally compassionate to all. Of these, however, he who adores Me in thought, word and deed, forswearing arrogance and wiles,—be it man, woman or one lacking the characteristics of both, or, for the matter of that, any living being whatsoever of the animate or inanimate world—he who adores Me with all his being, giving up all guile, is supremely dear to Me. O bird, I tell you in all sincerity that a guileless servant is dear to Me as life. Realizing this worship Me, abandoning all other hope and reliance." (*Uttara.*, 85. 1-4; 86-87)

The above discussion must have made it clear that the Lord Srī Rama of *Srī Ramacharitamanasa* is no other than the supreme integral Brahma or the Highest Person (Purusottama) and that unflinching and unalloyed Devotion is the only way to develop love for Him. Mukti for its part dogs the steps of such devotees seeking shelter with them; but those constant and faithful lovers, the devotees, who are enamoured of Bhakti alone, ignore Mukti:—

अस बिचारि हरिभगत सयाने । मुक्ति निरादर भगति लुभाने ॥

Let us, in conclusion, echo the following sentiments of Tulasidas, the crest-jewel of those conversant with the truth about Srī Rāma, and make this the supreme goal of our life:—

The form of Sīta-Rama—a sea
Of matchless charm does swell:
If both the eyes like fishes two
These waters deep indwell,
If hold the ears Srī Ram's annals,
The tongue His name if carries,
And lodged in chamber of the heart
Srī Rama for ever tarries,
The mind and heart if linked with Rama,
All go and help if His,
Not says of all, in Tulsi's view
Life's gain is only this.*

(*Kalyan*)

---

* सिय राम सरूप अगाध अनूप बिलोचन मीनन को जलु है ।
श्रुति रामकथा मुख राम को नाम हिए पुनि रामहि को थलु है ॥
मति रामहि सों गति रामहि सों रति राम सों रामहि को बलु है ।
सब की न कहै, तुलसी के मतें इतनो जग जीवन को फलु है ॥

ॐ

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

(The Manasa lake containing the exploits of Sri Rama)

Descent Five

(Sundara-Kāṇḍa)

श्लोक

शान्तं शाश्वतमप्रमेयमनघं निर्वाणशान्तिप्रदं
ब्रह्माशम्भुफणीन्द्रसेव्यमनिशं वेदान्तवेद्यं विभुम् ।
रामाख्यं जगदीश्वरं सुरगुरुं मायामनुष्यं हरिं
वन्देऽहं करुणाकरं रघुवरं भूपालचूडामणिम् ॥ १ ॥

I adore the Lord of the universe bearing the name of Rāma, the Chief of Raghu's line and the crest-jewel of kings, the mine of compassion, the dispeller of all sins, appearing in human form through His Māyā (deluding potency), the greatest of all gods, knowable through Vedānta (the Upaniṣads), constantly worshipped by Brahmā (the Creator), Śambhu (Lord Śiva) and Śeṣa (the serpent-god), the bestower of supreme peace in the form of final beatitude, placid, eternal, beyond the ordinary means of cognition, sinless and all-pervading. (1)

नान्या स्पृहा रघुपते हृदयेऽस्मदीये
सत्यं वदामि च भवानखिलान्तरात्मा ।
भक्तिं प्रयच्छ रघुपुङ्गव निर्भरां मे
कामादिदोषरहितं कुरु मानसं च ॥ २ ॥

There is no other craving in my heart, O Lord of the Raghus: I speak the truth and You are the Spirit indwelling the hearts of all. Grant me intense devotion to Your feet, O crest-jewel of Raghus, and free my mind from faults like concupiscence etc. (2)

अतुलितबलधामं हेमशैलाभदेहं
दनुजवनकृशानुं ज्ञानिनामग्रगण्यम् ।
सकलगुणनिधानं वानराणामधीशं
रघुपतिप्रियभक्तं वातजातं नमामि ॥ ३ ॥

I bow to the son of the wind-god, the beloved devotee of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), the chief of the monkeys, the repository of all virtues,

the foremost among the wise, a fire to consume the forest of the demon race, possessing a body shining as a mountain of gold and a home of immeasurable strength. (3)

जामवंत के बचन सुहाए । सुनि हनुमंत हृदय अति भाए ॥
तब लगि मोहि परिखेहु तुम्ह भाई । सहि दुख कंद मूल फल खाई ॥ १ ॥
जब लगि आवौं सीतहि देखी । होइहि काजु मोहि हरष बिसेषी ॥
यह कहि नाइ सबन्हि कहुँ माथा । चलेउ हरषि हियँ धरि रघुनाथा ॥ २ ॥
सिंधु तीर एक भूधर सुंदर । कौतुक कूदि चढ़ेउ ता ऊपर ॥
बार बार रघुबीर सँभारी । तरकेउ पवनतनय बल भारी ॥ ३ ॥
जेहिं गिरि चरन देइ हनुमंता । चलेउ सो गा पाताल तुरंता ॥
जिमि अमोघ रघुपति कर बाना । एही भाँति चलेउ हनुमाना ॥ ४ ॥
जलनिधि रघुपति दूत बिचारी । तैं मैनाक होहि श्रमहारी ॥ ५ ॥

Hanumān was much delighted at heart to hear the heartening speech of Jāmbavān. He said, "Suffering hardships and living on bulbs, roots and fruits, wait for me, brethren, till I return after seeing Sītā. I am sure our object will be accomplished as I feel very cheerful." So saying and after bowing his head to them all he set out full of joy with an image of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) enshrined in his heart. There was a beautiful hill on the sea-coast; he lightly sprang on to its top. And invoking the Hero of Raghu's line again and again, the son of the wind-god took a leap with all his might. The hill on which Hanumān planted his foot while leaping sank down immediately into the nethermost region (Pātāla). Hanumān sped forth in the same way as the unerring shaft of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). Knowing him to be Śrī Rāma's emissary, the deity presiding over the ocean spoke to Mount Maināka*, "Relieve him of his fatigue, O Maināka (by allowing him to rest on you)." (1–5)

दो०—हनूमान तेहि परसा कर पुनि कीन्ह प्रनाम ।
राम काजु कीन्हें बिनु मोहि कहाँ बिश्राम ॥ १ ॥

---

* It is mentioned in our scriptures that formerly mountains had wings and could fly like birds, but later on Indra clipped them of their wings by his thunderbolt and since then they became stationary. Mainaka, however, who was able to accelerate his speed with the help of the wind-god, rushed into the ocean and hid himself under its waters. The deity presiding over the ocean, who had been begotten by King Sagara, and was thus an ancestor of the Lord, took this opportunity to oblige Srī Rama and directed Maināka to come out of his hiding-place and give rest to His envoy in the mid-ocean so as to enable him to cross the ocean by easy stages. Out of gratitude to the ocean, who had afforded him shelter all the time, and in order to repay his obligation to the wind-god, Mainaka emerged from his asylum and served as a stepping-stone for Hanuman to rest on and replenish his store of energy. Hanuman, however, who was spurred on by his devotion to Srī Rama and depended on His all-sufficient grace, needed no other support and took leave of the mountain by merely acknowledging his services. The incident further shows Hanuman's unremitting zeal in the service of his Lord.

Hanumān simply touched the mountain with his hand and then made obeisance to it saying, "There can be no rest for me till I have accomplished Śrī Rāma's work." (1)

चौ०—जात पवनसुत देवन्ह देखा। जानैं कहुँ बल बुद्धि बिसेषा॥
सुरसा नाम अहिन्ह कै माता। पठइन्हि आइ कही तेहिं बाता॥ १॥
आजु सुरन्ह मोहि दीन्ह अहारा। सुनत बचन कह पवनकुमारा॥
राम काजु करि फिरि मैं आवौं। सीता कइ सुधि प्रभुहि सुनावौं॥ २॥
तब तव बदन पैठिहउँ आई। सत्य कहउँ मोहि जान दे माई॥
कवनेहुँ जतन देइ नहिं जाना। ग्रससि न मोहि कहेउ हनुमाना॥ ३॥
जोजन भरि तेहिं बदनु पसारा। कपि तनु कीन्ह दुगुन बिस्तारा॥
सोरह जोजन मुख तेहिं ठयऊ। तुरत पवनसुत बत्तिस भयऊ॥ ४॥
जस जस सुरसा बदनु बढ़ावा। तासु दून कपि रूप देखावा॥
सत जोजन तेहिं आनन कीन्हा। अति लघु रूप पवनसुत लीन्हा॥ ५॥
बदन पइठि पुनि बाहेर आवा। मागा बिदा ताहि सिरु नावा॥
मोहि सुरन्ह जेहि लागि पठावा। बुधि बल मरमु तोर मैं पावा॥ ६॥

The gods saw the son of the wind-god sweeping along; and in order to test his extraordinary strength and intelligence they sent Surasā, a mother of serpents, who came near him and said: "The gods have provided me a mea .oday." On hearing these words the .cn of the wind-god said in reply, "Let me return after accomplishing Śrī Rāma's errand and tell my lord the news of Sītā. Then I will approach you and enter your mouth: I tell you the truth. Mother, only let me go now." When, however, she would not let him go on any account, Hanumān said, "Then why not devour me ?" She distended her mouth to a distance of eight miles, while the chief of monkeys grew double the size of her mouth. She stretched her mouth to a circumference of a hundred and twenty-eight miles, and the son of the wind-god immediately took a form covering two hundred and fifty-six miles. Even as Surasā expanded her jaws the chief of the monkeys manifested a form twice as large as her mouth. When she further expanded her mouth eight hundred miles wide, the son of the wind-god assumed a very minute form, by which he entered her mouth and came out again and bowing his head to her begged leave to proceed. "I have gauged the extent of your wit and strength, the errand for which the gods had despatched me. (1—6)

दो०—राम काजु सबु करिहहु तुम्ह बल बुद्धि निधान।
आसिष देइ गई सो हरषि चलेउ हनुमान॥ २॥

"You will accomplish all the work of Śrī Rāma, a storehouse of strength and intelligence." Having blessed Hanumān she departed and Hanumān too joyfully resumed his journey (through the air). (2)

चौ०—निसिचरि एक सिंधु महुँ रहई। करि माया नभु के खग गहई॥
जीव जंतु जे गगन उड़ाहीं। जल बिलोकि तिन्ह कै परिछाहीं॥ १॥

गहइ छाहँ सक सो न उड़ाई । एहि बिधि सदा गगनचर खाई ॥
सोइ छल हनूमान कहँ कीन्हा । तासु कपटु कपि तुरतहिं चीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
ताहि मारि मारुतसुत बीरा । बारिधि पार गयउ मतिधीरा ॥
तहाँ जाइ देखी बन सोभा । गुंजत चंचरीक मधु लोभा ॥ ३ ॥
नाना तरु फल फूल सुहाए । खग मृग बृंद देखि मन भाए ॥
सैल बिसाल देखि एक आगें । ता पर धाइ चढ़ेउ भय त्यागें ॥ ४ ॥
उमा न कछु कपि कै अधिकाई । प्रभु प्रताप जो कालहि खाई ॥
गिरि पर चढ़ि लंका तेहिं देखी । कहि न जाइ अति दुर्ग बिसेषी ॥ ५ ॥
अति उतंग जलनिधि चहु पासा । कनक कोट कर परम प्रकासा ॥ ६ ॥

There was a demoness who dwelt in the ocean and would catch the birds in the air by conjuring tricks. Seeing on the surface of the water the reflection of the creature that coursed in the air she would catch it and the bird was unable to move. In this way she would devour birds every day. She employed the same trick against Hanuman, but the chief of monkeys at once saw through her game. The valiant son of the wind-god dispatched her and swept across the ocean, resolute of mind as he was. Reaching the other shore he gazed on the loveliness of the forest with the bees humming in quest of honey. Trees of various kinds looked charming with fruits and flowers; and he was particularly delighted at heart to see the numerous birds and beasts. Beholding a huge mountain ahead of him, he fearlessly ran up to its summit. The chief of the monkeys, O Uma (Parvatı), deserved no credit for it: it was all attributable to the glory of the Lord, who devours Death himself. Climbing up the hill he surveyed Lanka, a most marvellous fortress that defied description. It was very high and was enclosed by the ocean on all sides. The ramparts of gold shed great lustre all round. (1—6)

छं०—कनक कोट बिचित्र मनि कृत सुंदरायतना घना ।
चउहट्ट हट्ट सुबट्ट बीथीं चारु पुर बहु बिधि बना ॥
गज बाजि खच्चर निकर पदचर रथ बरूथन्हि को गनै ।
बहुरूप निसिचर जूथ अतिबल सेन बरनत नहिं बनै ॥ १ ॥
बन बाग उपबन बाटिका सर कूप बापीं सोहहीं ।
नर नाग सुर गंधर्ब कन्या रूप मुनि मन मोहहीं ॥
कहुँ माल देह बिसाल सैल समान अतिबल गर्जहीं ।
नाना अखारेन्ह भिरहिं बहुबिधि एक एकन्ह तर्जहीं ॥ २ ॥
करि जतन भट कोटिन्ह बिकट तन नगर चहुँ दिसि रच्छहीं ।
कहुँ महिष मानुष धेनु खर अज खल निसाचर भच्छहीं ॥
एहि लागि तुलसीदास इन्ह की कथा कछु एक है कही ।
रघुबीर सर तीरथ सरीरन्हि त्यागि गति पैहहिं सही ॥ ३ ॥

The charming city was enclosed by a fortification wall of gold inlaid with precious stones of various kinds, and contained many beautiful houses, cross roads, bazars, lovely streets and lanes, and was decorated in every way. Who could count the multitudes of elephants, horses and mules, the crowds of foot soldiers and chariots and the troops of demons of every shape—a formidable host beyond all description ? Groves and orchards, gardens and parks, lakes and also wells, big and small, looked charming; daughters of human beings, Nagas, gods and Gandharvas (celestial musicians) enraptured with their beauty the minds of even hermits. Here roared mighty wrestlers endowed with huge mountainlike forms. They grappled with one another in many ways in different courts and challenged one another to a duel. Myriads of champions possessing frightful forms sedulously guarded the city on all sides. Elsewhere the vile demons feasted on buffaloes, human beings, cows, donkeys and goats. Tulasīdāsa has briefly told their story only because they will drop their bodies at the sanctuary of Srī Rama's arrows and thereby attain the supreme state. (1—3)

दो०—पुर रखवारे देखि बहु कपि मन कीन्ह बिचार ।
अति लघु रूप धरौं निसि नगर करौं पइसार ॥ ३ ॥

Seeing a host of guards defending the city, the chief of the monkeys thought to himself, "Let me assume a very minute form and enter the city at night." (3)

चौ०—मसक समान रूप कपि धरी । लंकहि चलेउ सुमिरि नरहरी ॥
नाम लंकिनी एक निसिचरी । सो कह चलेसि मोहि निंदरी ॥ १ ॥
जानेहि नहीं मरमु सठ मोरा । मोर अहार जहाँ लगि चोरा ॥
मुठिका एक महा कपि हनी । रुधिर बमत धरनीं ढनमनी ॥ २ ॥
पुनि संभारि उठी सो लंका । जोरि पानि कर बिनय ससंका ॥
जब रावनहि ब्रह्म बर दीन्हा । चलत बिरंचि कहा मोहि चीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
बिकल होसि तैं कपि कें मारे । तब जानेसु निसिचर संघारे ॥
तात मोर अति पुन्य बहूता । देखेउँ नयन राम कर दूता ॥ ४ ॥

Hanuman assumed a form as small as a gnat and, invoking the Lord in human semblance (Bhagavan Srī Rama), headed towards Lanka. (At the gateway of Lanka) lived a demoness, Lankinī by name. "Where should you be going heedless of me ?" she said. "Fool, have you not been able to know who I am ? Every thief hereabout is my food." The great monkey dealt her such a blow with his fist that she toppled down vomiting blood. Then, recovering herself, Lanka (Lankinī) stood up, and joining her palms in dismay, humbly addressed him, "When Brahma granted Ravana the boon he had asked for, the Creator furnished me with the following clue (to the extermination of the demon race) while departing:—'When you get discomfited by a blow from a monkey, know that all is over with the demon race.' I must have earned very great merit, dear Hanuman, that I have been blessed with the sight of Srī Rama's own messenger. (1—4)

दो०—तात स्वर्ग अपबर्ग सुख धरिअ तुला एक अंग ।
तूल न ताहि सकल मिलि जो सुख लव सतसंग ॥ ४ ॥

"In one scale of the balance, dear son, put together the delights of heaven and the bliss of final beatitude; but they will all be outweighed by a moment's joy derived from communion with the saints. (4)

चौ०—प्रबिसि नगर कीजे सब काजा । हृदयँ राखि कोसलपुर राजा ॥
गरल सुधा रिपु करहिं मिताई । गोपद सिंधु अनल सितलाई ॥ १ ॥
गरुड़ सुमेरु रेनु सम ताही । राम कृपा करि चितवा जाही ॥
अति लघु रूप धरेउ हनुमाना । पैठा नगर सुमिरि भगवाना ॥ २ ॥
मंदिर मंदिर प्रति करि सोधा । देखे जहँ तहँ अगनित जोधा ॥
गयउ दसानन मंदिर माहीं । अति बिचित्र कहि जात सो नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
सयन किएँ देखा कपि तेही । मंदिर महुँ न दीखि बैदेही ॥
भवन एक पुनि दीख सुहावा । हरि मंदिर तहँ भिन्न बनावा ॥ ४ ॥

"Enter the city with the Lord of Ayodhyā enshrined in your heart and accomplish all your business. Poison is transformed into nectar, foes turn friends, the ocean contracts itself to the size of a cow's footprint, fire becomes cool and Mount Meru, O Garuḍa, appears like a grain of sand to him on whom Śrī Rāma has cast His benign look." Hanumān assumed a very minute form and invoking Śrī Rāma entered the city. He ransacked every mansion and saw countless warriors here and there. Then he made his way into Rāvaṇa's palace, which was marvellous beyond words. He saw the demon chief buried in sleep; but he did not find Videha's Daughter there. He then noticed another splendid building, with a temple sacred to Śrī Hari standing apart. (1—4)

दो०—रामायुध अंकित गृह सोभा बरनि न जाइ ।
नव तुलसिका बृंद तहँ देखि हरष कपिराइ ॥ ५ ॥

The mansion had the weapons (bow and arrow) of Śrī Rāma painted on its walls and was beautiful beyond words. The monkey chief rejoiced to see clusters of young Tulasī plants there. (5)

चौ०—लंका निसिचर निकर निवासा । इहाँ कहाँ सज्जन कर बासा ॥
मन महुँ तरक करैं कपि लागा । तेहीं समय बिभीषनु जागा ॥ १ ॥
राम राम तेहिं सुमिरन कीन्हा । हृदयँ हरष कपि सज्जन चीन्हा ॥
एहि सन हठि करिहउँ पहिचानी । साधु ते होइ न कारज हानी ॥ २ ॥
बिप्र रूप धरि बचन सुनाए । सुनत बिभीषन उठि तहँ आए ॥
करि प्रनाम पूँछी कुसलाई । बिप्र कहहु निज कथा बुझाई ॥ ३ ॥
की तुम्ह हरि दासन्ह महँ कोई । मोरें हृदय प्रीति अति होई ॥
की तुम्ह रामु दीन अनुरागी । आयहु मोहि करन बड़भागी ॥ ४ ॥

"Laṅkā is the abode of a gang of demons; how could a pious man take up his residence here?" While the monkey chief was thus reasoning within himself, Vibhīṣaṇa (Rāvaṇa's youngest brother) woke up. He began to repeat Śrī Rāma's name in prayer and Hanumān was delighted at

heart to find a virtuous soul. "I shall make acquaintance with him at all events; for one's cause would never suffer at the hands of a good man." Having thus resolved he assumed the form of a Brahman and accosted Vibhīṣaṇa. As soon as he heard Hanumān's words he rose and came where the latter was. Bowing low he enquired after the Brahman's welfare: "Tell me all about you, holy sir. Are you one of Śrī Hari's own servants (Nārada and others)? My heart is filled with exceeding love at your sight. Or are you Śrī Rāma Himself, a loving friend of the poor, who have come to bless me (by your sight)?" (1—4)

दो०—तब हनुमंत कही सब राम कथा निज नाम ।
सुनत जुगल तन पुलक मन मगन सुमिरि गुन ग्राम ॥ ६ ॥

Thereupon Hanumān told him all about Śrī Rāma and disclosed his identity as well. The moment Vibhīṣaṇa heard this a thrill ran through the body of both and they were transported with joy at the thought of Śrī Rāma's host of virtues. (6)

चौ०—सुनहु पवनसुत रहनि हमारी । जिमि दसनन्हि महुँ जीभ बिचारी ॥
तात कबहुँ मोहि जानि अनाथा । करिहहिं कृपा भानुकुल नाथा ॥ १ ॥
तामस तनु कछु साधन नाहीं । प्रीति न पद सरोज मन माहीं ॥
अब मोहि भा भरोस हनुमंता । बिनु हरिकृपा मिलहिं नहिं संता ॥ २ ॥
जौं रघुबीर अनुग्रह कीन्हा । तौ तुम्ह मोहि दरसु हठि दीन्हा ॥
सुनहु बिभीषन प्रभु कै रीती । करहिं सदा सेवक पर प्रीती ॥ ३ ॥
कहहु कवन मैं परम कुलीना । कपि चंचल सबहीं बिधि हीना ॥
प्रात लेइ जो नाम हमारा । तेहि दिन ताहि न मिलै अहारा ॥ ४ ॥

"Hear, O son of the wind-god, how I am living here: my plight is similar to that of the poor tongue, that lives in the midst of the teeth. Will the Lord of the solar race, dear friend, ever show His grace to me, knowing me to be masterless? Endowed as I am with a sinful (demoniac) form, I am incapable of doing any Sādhana (striving for God-Realization); and my heart cherishes no love for the Lord's lotus feet. But I am now confident, Hanumān, that Śrī Rāma will shower His grace on me; for one can never meet a saint without Śrī Hari's grace. It is only because the Hero of Raghu's race has been kind to me that you have blessed me with your sight unsolicited." "Listen, Vibhīṣaṇa: the Lord is ever affectionate to His servants; for such is His wont. Tell me what superior birth can I claim—a frivolous monkey vile in every way, so much so that if anyone mentions our name early in the morning he is sure to go without any food that day. (1—4)

दो०—अस मैं अधम सखा सुनु मोहू पर रघुबीर ।
कीन्ही कृपा सुमिरि गुन भरे बिलोचन नीर ॥ ७ ॥

"Listen, my friend: though I am so wretched, the Hero of Raghu's race has shown His grace even to me!" And his eyes filled with tears as he recalled the Lord's virtues. (7)

चौ०—जानतहूँ अस स्वामि बिसारी । फिरहिं ते काहे न होहिं दुखारी ॥
एहि बिधि कहत राम गुन ग्रामा । पावा अनिर्बाच्य बिश्रामा ॥ १ ॥
पुनि सब कथा बिभीषन कही । जेहि बिधि जनकसुता तहँ रही ॥
तब हनुमंत कहा सुनु भ्राता । देखी चहउँ जानकी माता ॥ २ ॥
जुगुति बिभीषन सकल सुनाई । चलेउ पवनसुत बिदा कराई ॥
करि सोइ रूप गयउ पुनि तहवाँ । बन असोक सीता रह जहवाँ ॥ ३ ॥
देखि मनहि महुँ कीन्ह प्रनामा । बैठेहिं बीति जात निसि जामा ॥
कृस तनु सीस जटा एक बेनी । जपति हृदयँ रघुपति गुन श्रेनी ॥ ४ ॥

"It is not to be wondered that those who knowingly forget such a lord and go adrift should be unhappy." Thus recounting Srī Rama's virtues, Hanuman derived unspeakable solace. Then Vibhīsana fully narrated how Janaka's Daughter had been living there. Thereupon Hanuman said, "Listen, brother: I should like to see Mother Sīta." Vibhīsana fully explained to him the method of seeing Her and the son of the wind-god took leave of Vibhīsana and proceeded on his errand. Assuming the same (minute) form as he had taken before, he repaired to the Asoka grove where Sīta dwelt. He mentally bowed to Her as soon as he saw Her. Obviously She had been squatting away the hours of the night. Emaciated in body, She wore a single braid* of matted hair on Her head and repeated to Herself the list of Srī Rama's excellences.

(1—4)

दो०—निज पद नयन दिएँ मन राम पद कमल लीन ।
परम दुखी भा पवनसुत देखि जानकी दीन ॥ ८ ॥

She had Her eyes fixed on Her own feet, while Her mind was absorbed in the thought of Srī Rama's lotus feet. The son of the wind-god felt supremely miserable to see Janaka's Daughter sad.

(8)

चौ०—तरु पल्लव महुँ रहा लुकाई । करइ बिचार करौं का भाई ॥
तेहि अवसर रावनु तहँ आवा । संग नारि बहु किएँ बनावा ॥ १ ॥
बहु बिधि खल सीतहि समुझावा । साम दान भय भेद देखावा ॥
कह रावनु सुनु सुमुखि सयानी । मंदोदरी आदि सब रानी ॥ २ ॥
तव अनुचरीं करउँ पन मोरा । एक बार बिलोकु मम ओरा ॥
तृन धरि ओट कहति बैदेही । सुमिरि अवधपति परम सनेही ॥ ३ ॥
सुनु दसमुख खद्योत प्रकासा । कबहुँ कि नलिनी करइ बिकासा ॥
अस मन समुझु कहति जानकी । खल सुधि नहिं रघुबीर बान की ॥ ४ ॥
सठ सूनें हरि आनेहि मोही । अधम निलज्ज लाज नहिं तोही ॥ ५ ॥

Concealing himself among the leaves of a tree he mused within himself, "Come, sir, what should I do?" At that very moment Ravana arrived there

* It is customary with Indian women to wear a single braid of hair when separated from their husband.

gaily adorned and accompanied by a troop of women. The wretch tried to prevail upon Her in many ways through friendly advice, allurements, threats and estrangement. Said Ravana, "Listen, O beautiful and wise lady: I will make Mandodarī and all other queens your handmaids, I swear, provided you cast your look on me only once." Interposing* a blade of grass between Herself and Ravana and fixing Her thoughts on Her most beloved lord (Srī Rama), the King of Ayodhya, Videha's Daughter rejoined: "Listen, O ten-headed monster: can a lotus flower ever expand in the glow of a fire-fly?" "Ponder this at heart," continued Janaka's Daughter; "perhaps you have no idea what Srī Rama's shafts are like, O wretch. You carried me off at a time when there was none by my side; yet you do not feel ashamed, O vile and impudent rogue!" (1—5)

दो०—आपुहि सुनि खद्योत सम रामहि भानु समान ।
परुष बचन सुनि काढ़ि असि बोला अति खिसिआन ॥ ९ ॥

Hearing himself likened to a glow-worm and Srī Rama compared to the sun, and exasperated at Her harsh words, the monster drew out his sword and said:— (9)

चौ०—सीता तैं मम कृत अपमाना । कटिहउँ तव सिर कठिन कृपाना ॥
नाहिं त सपदि मानु मम बानी । सुमुखि होति न त जीवन हानी ॥ १ ॥
स्याम सरोज दाम सम सुंदर । प्रभु भुज करि कर सम दसकंधर ॥
सो भुज कंठ कि तव असि घोरा । सुनु सठ अस प्रवान पन मोरा ॥ २ ॥
चंद्रहास हरु मम परितापं । रघुपति बिरह अनल संजातं ॥
सीतल निसित बहसि बर धारा । कह सीता हरु मम दुख भारा ॥ ३ ॥
सुनत बचन पुनि मारन धावा । मयतनयाँ कहि नीति बुझावा ॥
कहेसि सकल निसिचरिन्ह बोलाई । सीतहि बहु बिधि त्रासहु जाई ॥ ४ ॥
मास दिवस महुँ कहा न माना । तौ मैं मारबि काढ़ि कृपाना ॥ ५ ॥

"Sīta, you have offered me an insult; I will accordingly cut off your head with my relentless sword. If not, obey my command at once; or else you lose your life, O beautiful lady." "My lord's arm is lovely as a string of blue lotuses and shapely and long as the trunk of an elephant, O ten-headed monster. Either that arm or your dreadful sword will have my neck: hear this my solemn vow, O fool. (Turning to Ravana's glittering scimitar) Take away, O Chandrahasa†, the burning anguish of my heart caused by the fire of separation from the Lord of the Raghus. You possess a cool, sharp and good blade; therefore, relieve the burden of my sorrow," Sīta said. On hearing these words he rushed forward to kill Her; it was Queen Mandodarī (Maya's daughter) who (intervened and) pacified him with words of good

* According to the Hindu etiquette a lady must not talk to a male stranger without a medium. Being forced to violate the above rule at this emergency Sītā takes recourse to the aforesaid expedient.

† The word literally means 'that which derides the moon by its cool brilliance'. Though generally used as a synonym for a curved sword, it particularly denotes the sword possessed by Rāvaṇa

counsel. Summoning all the demonesses (posted there) he said, "Go and intimidate Sītā in every way. If she does not accept my advice in a month's time I will draw my sword and behead her." (1—5)

दो०—भवन गयउ दसकंधर इहाँ पिसाचिनि बृंद ।
सीतहि त्रास देखावहिं धरहिं रूप बहु मंद ॥ १० ॥

(Having issued these instructions) the ten-headed Rāvaṇa returned to his palace; while the host of fiendesses in the Aśoka grove assumed various kinds of hideous forms and intimidated Sītā. (10)

चौ०—त्रिजटा नाम राच्छसी एका । राम चरन रति निपुन बिबेका ॥
सबन्हौ बोलि सुनाएसि सपना । सीतहि सेइ करहु हित अपना ॥ १ ॥
सपनें बानर लंका जारी । जातुधान सेना सब मारी ॥
खर आरूढ़ नगन दससीसा । मुंडित सिर खंडित भुज बीसा ॥ २ ॥
एहि बिधि सो दच्छिन दिसि जाई । लंका मनहुँ बिभीषन पाई ॥
नगर फिरी रघुबीर दोहाई । तब प्रभु सीता बोलि पठाई ॥ ३ ॥
यह सपना मैं कहउँ पुकारी । होइहि सत्य गएँ दिन चारी ॥
तासु बचन सुनि ते सब डरीं । जनकसुता के चरनन्हि परीं ॥ ४ ॥

One of these demonesses, Trijaṭā by name, was devoted to Śrī Rāma's feet and perfect in spiritual wisdom. She summoned all her companions, told them her dream and exhorted them to serve Sītā and thus bless themselves. "In my dream a monkey burnt Lankā and the whole demon host was killed. As for the ten-headed Rāvaṇa, I saw him mounted on a donkey, all naked, with his heads shorn and his twenty arms chopped off. In this fashion he went his way to the south*; and it so appeared that Lankā had passed into the hands of Vibhīṣaṇa. Śrī Rāma's victory was proclaimed (by beat of drum) throughout the city: it was then that the Lord (Śrī Rāma) sent for Sītā. This dream, I loudly proclaim, will come true a few days hence." They were all dismayed to hear her words and fell at the feet of Janaka's Daughter. (1—4)

दो०—जहँ तहँ गईं सकल तब सीता कर मन सोच ।
मास दिवस बीतें मोहि मारिहि निसिचर पोच ॥ ११ ॥

Then they all dispersed in various directions and Sītā anxiously thought within Herself: "At the end of a long month this vile monster will slay me.†" (11)

---

as a gift from Bhagavān Śankara, to whom it originally belonged. In Her utter despair Sītā looked to Rāvaṇa's sword alone to come to Her rescue and end Her miserable existence; and the sword, though cruel and dreadful to all appearance, appeared to Her as agreeable and soothing as the moon's rays to a burning heart. The appellation 'Chandrahāsa' thus sounded most appropriate to Her.

* The abode of Yama (the god of death) is believed to be in the south. That is why journey in a dream to the south is supposed to forebode death.

† As appears from what follows, it is not death that Sītā dreads, but the long interval of a month which has to elapse before Her threatened death.

चौ०–त्रिजटा सन बोलीं कर जोरी। मातु बिपति संगिनि तैं मोरी॥
तजौं देह करु बेगि उपाई। दुसह बिरहु अब नहिं सहि जाई॥ १॥
आनि काठ रचु चिता बनाई। मातु अनल पुनि देहि लगाई॥
सत्य करहि मम प्रीति सयानी। सुनै को श्रवन सूल सम बानी॥ २॥
सुनत बचन पद गहि समुझाएसि। प्रभु प्रताप बल सुजसु सुनाएसि॥
निसि न अनल मिल सुनु सुकुमारी। अस कहि सो निज भवन सिधारी॥ ३॥
कह सीता बिधि भा प्रतिकूला। मिलिहि न पावक मिटिहि न सूला॥
देखिअत प्रगट गगन अंगारा। अवनि न आवत एकउ तारा॥ ४॥
पावकमय ससि स्रवत न आगी। मानहुँ मोहि जानि हतभागी॥
सुनहि बिनय मम बिटप असोका। सत्य नाम करु हरु मम सोका॥ ५॥
नूतन किसलय अनल समाना। देहि अगिनि जनि करहि निदाना॥
देखि परम बिरहाकुल सीता। सो छन कपिहि कलप सम बीता॥ ६॥

With joined palms She said to Trijaṭā, "Mother, you are my only companion in adversity. Therefore, quickly devise some means whereby I may be enabled to cast off this body; for this desolation, which is so hard to bear, can no longer be endured. Bring some wood and put up a pyre; and then, my mother, set fire to it. Thus prove the genuineness of my love for the Lord, O wise lady. Who will stand Rāvaṇa's words, that pierce the ear like a shaft?" On hearing these words she clasped Sītā's feet and comforted Her by recounting the majesty, might and glory of Her lord. "Listen, O tender lady: no fire can be had at night." So saying she left for her residence. Sītā said (to Herself), "Heaven itself has turned hostile to me; there is no fire to be had and I cannot be cured of my agony otherwise. Sparks of fire are visibly seen in the heavens; but not a single star drops to the earth. The moon, though all fire, refuses to rain sparks, as if conscious of my wretchedness. Hear my prayer, O Aśoka tree: take away my sorrow and answer to your name*. Your fresh and tender leaves bear the colour of flames; therefore, supply me with fire and do not aggravate my agony beyond limits." The moment seemed like an age† to Hanumān as he beheld Sītā extremely distressed due to Her separation from Her lord. (1—6)

सो०––कपि करि हृदयँ बिचार दीन्हि मुद्रिका डारि तब।
जनु असोक अंगार दीन्ह हरषि उठि कर गहेउ॥ १२॥

Then, taking thought within himself, Hanumān (the monkey chief) dropped down the signet ring, as though the Aśoka tree had thrown a spark (in response to Her prayer). She sprang up with joy and took it in Her hand. (12)

चौ०–तब देखी मुद्रिका मनोहर। राम नाम अंकित अति सुंदर॥
चकित चितव मुदरी पहिचानी। हरष बिषाद हृदयँ अकुलानी॥ १॥

* The word 'Aśoka' literally means that which ends sorrow.

† Literally speaking, the word 'Kalpa' denotes the span of life of the universe, which has been calculated to cover 4,32,00,00,000 years.

जीति को सकइ अजय रघुराई । माया तें असि रचि नहिं जाई ॥
सीता मन बिचार कर नाना । मधुर बचन बोलेउ हनुमाना ॥ २ ॥
रामचंद्र गुन बरनैं लागा । सुनतहिं सीता कर दुख भागा ॥
लागीं सुनैं श्रवन मन लाई । आदिहु तें सब कथा सुनाई ॥ ३ ॥
श्रवनामृत जेहिं कथा सुहाई । कही सो प्रगट होति किन भाई ॥
तब हनुमंत निकट चलि गयऊ । फिरि बैठीं मन बिसमय भयऊ ॥ ४ ॥
राम दूत मैं मातु जानकी । सत्य सपथ करुनानिधान की ॥
यह मुद्रिका मातु मैं आनी । दीन्हि राम तुम्ह कहँ सहिदानी ॥ ५ ॥
नर बानरहि संग कहु कैसें । कही कथा भइ संगति जैसें ॥ ६ ॥

Now She saw the charming ring with the name of SrI Rama most beautifully engraved on it. Recognizing the ring She looked at it with wonder and was agitated at heart with a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow. "Who can conquer the invincible Lord of the Raghus and such a (divine) ring cannot be prepared through Maya (a conjuring trick)." As SIta thus indulged in fancies of various kinds, Hanuman spoke in honeyed accents and began to recount SrI Ramachandra's praises. The moment they reached Sita's ears Her grief took flight. She listened with all Her soul and ears while Hanuman narrated the whole story from the very beginning. "Wherefore does she who has told this tale, which is like nectar to my ears, not reveal herself ?*" Thereupon Hanuman drew near Her, while SIta sat with Her back turned towards him, full of amazement. "I am SrI Rama's messenger, mother JanakI: I solemnly swear by the all-merciful Lord Himself. This ring has been brought by me, O mother; SrI Rama gave it to me as a token for you." "Tell me what brought about this fellowship between a man and a monkey." Then Hanuman explained the circumstances in which a union was brought about between men and monkeys. (1—6)

दो०—कपि के बचन सप्रेम सुनि उपजा मन बिस्वास ।
जाना मन क्रम बचन यह कृपासिंधु कर दास ॥ १३ ॥

As She heard the monkey's affectionate words Her soul trusted him and She recognized him to be a servant of the all-merciful Lord in thought, word and deed. (13)

चौ०—हरिजन जानि प्रीति अति गाढ़ी । सजल नयन पुलकावलि बाढ़ी ॥
बूड़त बिरह जलधि हनुमाना । भयहु तात मो कहुँ जलजाना ॥ १ ॥
अब कहु कुसल जाउँ बलिहारी । अनुज सहित सुख भवन खरारी ॥
कोमलचित कृपाल रघुराई । कपि केहि हेतु धरी निठुराई ॥ २ ॥
सहज बानि सेवक सुख दायक । कबहुँक सुरति करत रघुनायक ॥
कबहुँ नयन मम सीतल ताता । होइहहिं निरखि स्याम मृदु गाता ॥ ३ ॥

*Obviously the orchard in which Sita had been confined was open to the fair sex alone. Naturally, therefore, when She heard an unseen voice utter Sri Rama's praises, She concluded that it must be some female.

बचनु न आव नयन भरे बारी । अहह नाथ हौं निपट बिसारी ॥
देखि परम बिरहाकुल सीता । बोला कपि मृदु बचन बिनीता ॥ ४ ॥
मातु कुसल प्रभु अनुज समेता । तव दुख दुखी सुकृपा निकेता ॥
जनि जननी मानहु जियँ ऊना । तुम्ह ते प्रेमु राम कें दूना ॥ ५ ॥

Perceiving him to be a devotee of Srī Hari She developed an intense affection for him. Her eyes filled with tears and a thrill ran through Her body. "To me who was being drowned in the ocean of desolation, dear Hanuman, you have come as a veritable bark. Now tell me, I adjure you, the welfare of all-blissful Srī Rama (the Slayer of Khara) and His younger brother (Laksmana). Wherefore has the tender-hearted and compassionate Lord of the Raghus become so hard-hearted? Does the Chief of the Raghus ever remember me,—He who is by natural disposition a source of delight to His servants? Will my eyes, dear Hanuman, be ever gladdened by the sight of His swarthy and delicate limbs?" Words failed Her and Her eyes swam with tears. "Ah, my lord! You have entirely forgotten me." Seeing Sīta sore distressed due to Her separation from Her lord, Hanuman addressed Her in soft and polite accents: "The Lord and His younger brother (Laksmana) are both doing well, mother, except for the fact that the All-merciful is sorrowful because of Your sorrow. Do not feel vexed at heart, mother; Srī Rama loves You twice as much as You love Him.

(1—5)

दो०—रघुपति कर संदेसु अब सुनु जननी धरि धीर ।
अस कहि कपि गदगद भयउ भरे बिलोचन नीर ॥ १४ ॥

"Mother, compose Yourself now and hear the message of Srī Rama (the Lord of the Raghus)." Even as he uttered these words, the monkey's voice was choked with emotion and his eyes filled with tears. (14)

चौ०—कहेउ राम बियोग तव सीता । मो कहुँ सकल भए बिपरीता ॥
नव तरु किसलय मनहुँ कृसानू । कालनिसा सम निसि ससि भानू ॥ १ ॥
कुबलय बिपिन कुंत बन सरिसा । बारिद तपत तेल जनु बरिसा ॥
जे हित रहे करत तेइ पीरा । उरग स्वास सम त्रिबिध समीरा ॥ २ ॥
कहेहू तें कछु दुख घटि होई । काहि कहौं यह जान न कोई ॥
तत्त्व प्रेम कर मम अरु तोरा । जानत प्रिया एकु मनु मोरा ॥ ३ ॥
सो मनु सदा रहत तोहि पाहीं । जानु प्रीति रसु एतनेहि माहीं ॥
प्रभु संदेसु सुनत बैदेही । मगन प्रेम तन सुधि नहिं तेही ॥ ४ ॥
कह कपि हृदयँ धीर धरु माता । सुमिरु राम सेवक सुखदाता ॥
उर आनहु रघुपति प्रभुताई । सुनि मम बचन तजहु कदराई ॥ ५ ॥

"Srī Rama said: Ever since I have been separated from you, Sīta, everything to me has become its very reverse. The fresh and tender leaves on the trees look like tongues of fire; nights appear as dreadful as the night of final dissolution and the moon scorches like the sun. Beds of lotuses

are like so many spears planted on the ground, while rain-clouds pour boiling oil as it were. Those that were friendly before have now become tormenting; the cool, soft and fragrant breezes are now like the breath of a serpent. One's agony is assuaged to some extent even by speaking of it; but to whom shall I speak about it ? For there is no one who will understand. The reality about the chord of love that binds you and me, dear, is known to my soul alone; and my soul ever abides with you. Know this to be the essence of my love." Videha's Daughter was so absorbed in love the moment She heard the Lord's message, that She lost all consciousness of Her body. Said the monkey, "Mother, collect Yourself, and fix Your thoughts on Śrī Rāma, the delight of His servants. Reflect on the glory of the Lord of the Raghus and shake off all faint-heartedness upon my word.

(1—5)

दो०—निसिचर निकर पतंग सम रघुपति बान कृसानु ।
जननी हृदयँ धीर धरु जरे निसाचर जानु ॥ १५ ॥

"The hosts of demons are like so many moths, while the shafts of the Lord of the Raghus are like flames. Have courage in Your heart, mother, and take the demons as consumed.

(15)

चौ०—जौं रघुबीर होति सुधि पाई । करते नहिं बिलंबु रघुराई ॥
राम बान रबि उएँ जानकी । तम बरूथ कहँ जातुधान की ॥ १ ॥
अबहिं मातु मैं जाउँ लवाई । प्रभु आयसु नहिं राम दोहाई ॥
कछुक दिवस जननी धरु धीरा । कपिन्ह सहित अइहहिं रघुबीरा ॥ २ ॥
निसिचर मारि तोहि लै जैहहिं । तिहुँ पुर नारदादि जसु गैहहिं ॥
हैं सुत कपि सब तुम्हहि समाना । जातुधान अति भट बलवाना ॥ ३ ॥
मोरें हृदय परम संदेहा । सुनि कपि प्रगट कीन्हि निज देहा ॥
कनक भूधराकार सरीरा । समर भयंकर अतिबल बीरा ॥ ४ ॥
सीता मन भरोस तब भयऊ । पुनि लघु रूप पवनसुत लयऊ ॥ ५ ॥

"Had the Hero of Raghu's line any news about You, the Lord of the Raghus would not have tarried. The moment Śrī Rāma's arrows make their appearance like the sun, the demon host would be scattered like the shadows of night. Mother, I would take You to Him this very moment; but, I swear by Rāma, I have no such orders from the Lord. Therefore, wait patiently for some days more, mother, till the Hero of Raghu's line arrives with the troops of monkeys. Slaughtering the demons, He will take You away; while Nārada and the other sages will glorify Him in all the three spheres of creation." "But, my son, all the monkeys must be pygmies like you, whereas the demons are mighty and great warriors. I have grave misgivings in my heart on this score." On hearing this the monkey revealed His natural form, colossal as a mountain of gold, terrible in battle, possessing great might and full of valour. Sītā now took comfort in Her heart and the son of the wind-god thereupon resumed his diminutive appearance.

(1—5)

दो०—सुनु माता साखामृग नहिं बल बुद्धि बिसाल ।
प्रभु प्रताप तें गरुड़हि खाइ परम लघु ब्याल ॥ १६ ॥

"Listen, mother: monkeys possess no great strength or intelligence either; but, through the Lord's might, the most tiny snake might swallow Garuḍa (the king of birds and the mount of Bhagavān Viṣṇu)." (16)

चौ०—मन संतोष सुनत कपि बानी। भगति प्रताप तेज बल सानी॥
आसिष दीन्हि रामप्रिय जाना। होहु तात बल सील निधाना॥ १॥
अजर अमर गुननिधि सुत होहू। करहुँ बहुत रघुनायक छोहू॥
करहुँ कृपा प्रभु अस सुनि काना। निर्भर प्रेम मगन हनुमाना॥ २॥
बार बार नाएसि पद सीसा। बोला बचन जोरि कर कीसा॥
अब कृतकृत्य भयउँ मैं माता। आसिष तव अमोघ बिख्याता॥ ३॥
सुनहु मातु मोहि अतिसय भूखा। लागि देखि सुंदर फल रूखा॥
सुनु सुत करहिं बिपिन रखवारी। परम सुभट रजनीचर भारी॥ ४॥
तिन्ह कर भय माता मोहि नाहीं। जौं तुम्ह सुख मानहु मन माहीं॥ ५॥

Sītā felt gratified at heart even as She heard the monkey's words full of devotion and revealing Śrī Rāma's majesty, glory and strength. Recognizing him as the beloved of Śrī Rāma She gave him Her blessing: "May you become a repository of strength and virtue, dear child. May you ever remain immune from old age and death and prove to be a storehouse of good qualities, my son; and may the Lord of the Raghus shower His abundant grace on you." The moment the words "May the Lord be gracious to you" reached his ears Hanumān was utterly overwhelmed with emotion. Again and again the monkey bowed his head at Her feet and with joined palms addressed Her thus: "I have now accomplished all that I had to accomplish, my mother; for your blessing, everyone knows, is unfailing. Listen, mother: I am feeling frightfully hungry at the sight of these trees laden with delicious fruits." "I tell you, my son, this grove is guarded by most valiant and mighty demons." "Mother, I am not at all afraid of them, only if I have your hearty approval." (1—5)

दो०—देखि बुद्धि बल निपुन कपि कहेउ जानकीं जाहु।
रघुपति चरन हृदयँ धरि तात मधुर फल खाहु॥ १७॥

Seeing the monkey perfect in strength and wit, Janaka's Daughter said, "Go, my son, and enjoy the luscious fruit with your heart fixed on Śrī Rāma's feet." (17)

चौ०—चलेउ नाइ सिरु पैठेउ बागा। फल खाएसि तरु तोरैं लागा॥
रहे तहाँ बहु भट रखवारे। कछु मारेसि कछु जाइ पुकारे॥ १॥
नाथ एक आवा कपि भारी। तेहिं असोक बाटिका उजारी॥
खाएसि फल अरु बिटप उपारे। रच्छक मर्दि मर्दि महि डारे॥ २॥
सुनि रावन पठए भट नाना। तिन्हहि देखि गर्जेउ हनुमाना॥
सब रजनीचर कपि संघारे। गए पुकारत कछु अधमारे॥ ३॥
पुनि पठयउ तेहिं अच्छकुमारा। चला संग लै सुभट अपारा॥
आवत देखि बिटप गहि तर्जा। ताहि निपाति महाधुनि गर्जा॥ ४॥

Bowing his head he went forth and entered the grove; and having eaten the fruit he began to break down the trees. A number of warriors had been posted there as guards; some of them were killed by him, while the rest took flight and cried for help. "O lord, a huge monkey has made his appearance and laid waste the Aśoka grove. He has eaten fruits, uprooted trees and, having crushed the watchmen, has laid them on the ground." On hearing this, Ravana despatched a number of his champions. Hanuman roared when he saw them and slaughtered the whole demon host. A few that had survived, though well-nigh killed, escaped screaming. Ravana then sent prince Akṣa, who sallied forth with a vast number of his best warriors. Seeing them approach, Hanuman seized a tree and threatened them and, having overthrown the prince, roared with a loud yell. (1—4)

दो०—कछु मारेसि कछु मर्देसि कछु मिलएसि धरि धूरि ।
कछु पुनि जाइ पुकारे प्रभु मर्कट बल भूरि ॥ १८ ॥

Some he slew, some he crushed and some he seized and pounded with dust. And some who escaped cried, "O lord, the monkey is too strong for us." (18)

चौ०—सुनि सुत बध लंकेस रिसाना । पठएसि मेघनाद बलवाना ॥
मारसि जनि सुत बाँधेसु ताही । देखिअ कपिहि कहाँ कर आही ॥ १ ॥
चला इंद्रजित अतुलित जोधा । बंधु निधन सुनि उपजा क्रोधा ॥
कपि देखा दारुन भट आवा । कटकटाइ गर्जा अरु धावा ॥ २ ॥
अति बिसाल तरु एक उपारा । बिरथ कीन्ह लंकेस कुमारा ॥
रहे महाभट ताके संगा । गहि गहि कपि मर्दइ निज अंगा ॥ ३ ॥
तिन्हहि निपाति ताहि सन बाजा । भिरे जुगल मानहुँ गजराजा ॥
मुठिका मारि चढ़ा तरु जाई । ताहि एक छन मुरुछा आई ॥ ४ ॥
उठि बहोरि कीन्हिसि बहु माया । जीति न जाइ प्रभंजन जाया ॥ ५ ॥

The King of Lanka flew into a rage when he heard of his son's death and sent the mighty Meghanada. "Kill him not, my son, but bind him. Let us see the monkey and ascertain wherefrom he comes." Meghanada (the conqueror of Indra) sallied forth, a peerless champion, seized with fury at the news of his brother's death. When Hanuman saw this fierce warrior approach, he gnashed his teeth and with a roar rushed forward to meet him. He tore up a tree of enormous size and smashed with it the car, thus rendering the crown prince of Lanka without any transport. As for the mighty warriors who accompanied him, Hanuman seized them one by one and crushed them by the weight of his limbs. Having finished them off, he closed with Meghanada. It was like the encounter of two lordly elephants. Striking the opponent with his clenched fist, Hanuman sprang and climbed up a tree; while Meghanada lay unconscious for a moment. He rose again and resorted to many a delusive device; but the son of the wind-god was not to be vanquished. (1—5)

दो०—ब्रह्म अस्त्र तेहि साँधा कपि मन कीन्ह बिचार ।
जौं न ब्रह्मसर मानउँ महिमा मिटइ अपार ॥ १९ ॥

Meghanāda ultimately fitted to his bow the arrow known as Brahmastra (the weapon presided over by Brahma), when Hanuman thought within himself: "If I submit not to Brahma's own weapon, its infinite glory will be cast to the winds." (19)

चौ०—ब्रह्मबान कपि कहुँ तेहिं मारा । परतिहुँ बार कटकु संघारा ॥
तेहिं देखा कपि मुरुछित भयऊ । नागपास बाँधेसि लै गयऊ ॥ १ ॥
जासु नाम जपि सुनहु भवानी । भव बंधन काटहिं नर ग्यानी ॥
तासु दूत कि बंध तरु आवा । प्रभु कारज लगि कपिहिं बँधावा ॥ २ ॥
कपि बंधन सुनि निसिचर धाए । कौतुक लागि सभाँ सब आए ॥
दसमुख सभा दीखि कपि जाई । कहि न जाइ कछु अति प्रभुताई ॥ ३ ॥
कर जोरें सुर दिसिप बिनीता । भृकुटि बिलोकत सकल सभीता ॥
देखि प्रताप न कपि मन संका । जिमि अहिगन महुँ गरुड़ असंका ॥ ४ ॥

He launched the Brahmastra against Hanuman, who crushed a whole host even as he fell. When he saw that the monkey had swooned, he entangled the latter in a noose of serpents* and carried him off. Now, Parvati, is it conceivable that the envoy of the Lord whose very name enables the wise to cut asunder the bonds of mundane existence should come under bondage ? No, it was in the service of the Lord that Hanuman allowed himself to be bound. When the demons heard that the monkey had been captured and noosed, they all rushed to the court in order to enjoy the spectacle. The monkey arrived and saw Ravana's court: his superb glory baffled description. Even gods and regents of the quarters stood meek with joined palms, all watching the movement of his eyebrows in great dismay. But the monkey's soul was no more disturbed at the sight of his power than Garuda (the king of birds) would be frightened in the midst of a number of serpents. (1—4)

दो०—कपिहि बिलोकि दसानन बिहसा कहि दुर्बाद ।
सुत बध सुरति कीन्हि पुनि उपजा हृदयँ बिषाद ॥ २० ॥

When the ten-headed monster saw the monkey he laughed and railed at him. But presently he recalled his son's death and felt sad at heart. (20)

चौ०—कह लंकेस कवन तैं कीसा । केहि के बल घालेहि बन खीसा ॥
की धौं श्रवन सुनेहि नहिं मोही । देखउँ अति असंक सठ तोही ॥ १ ॥
मारे निसिचर केहिं अपराधा । कहु सठ तोहि न प्रान कइ बाधा ॥
सुनु रावन ब्रह्मांड निकाया । पाइ जासु बल बिरचति माया ॥ २ ॥
जाकें बल बिरंचि हरि ईसा । पालत सृजत हरत दससीसा ॥
जा बल सीस धरत सहसानन । अंडकोस समेत गिरि कानन ॥ ३ ॥
धरइ जो बिबिध देह सुरत्राता । तुम्ह से सठन्ह सिखावनु दाता ॥

* A special contrivance to entangle the enemy, possessed by Varuna (the god presiding over the waters) and evidently snatched from the latter by Ravana.

हर कोदंड कठिन जेहिं भंजा । तेहि समेत नृप दल मद गंजा ॥ ४ ॥
खर दूषन त्रिसिरा अरु बाली । बधे सकल अतुलित बलसाली ॥ ५ ॥

Said the king of Lankā, "Who are you, monkey, and by whose might have you wrought the destruction of the grove ? What, did you never hear my name ? I see you are an exceptionally bold wretch. For what offence did you kill the demons ? Tell me, fool, are you not afraid of losing your life ?" "Listen, Rāvaṇa: recall Him by whose might Māyā (Nature) brings forth numberless universes; by whose might, O ten-headed monster, Brahmā, Hari (Viṣṇu) and Īśa (Śiva) carry on their respective functions of creation, preservation and destruction; by whose might the thousand-headed serpent (Śeṣa) supports on his head the entire globe with its mountains and forests; who assumes various forms in order to protect the gods and teach a lesson to wretches like you; who broke Śiva's unbending bow and crushed with it the pride of a host of princes; who dispatched Khara, Dūṣaṇa, Triśirā and Vālī, all unequalled in strength;

(1—5)

दो०—जाके बल लवलेस तें जितेहु चराचर झारि ।
तासु दूत मैं जा करि हरि आनेहु प्रिय नारि ॥ २१ ॥

"By an iota of whose might you were able to conquer the entire creation, both animate and inanimate, and whose beloved spouse has been stolen away by you. Know me to be His envoy."

(21)

चौ०—जानउँ मैं तुम्हारि प्रभुताई । सहसबाहु सन परी लराई ॥
समर बालि सन करि जसु पावा । सुनि कपि बचन बिहसि बिहरावा ॥ १ ॥
खायउँ फल प्रभु लागी भूँखा । कपि सुभाव तें तोरेउँ रूखा ॥
सब कें देह परम प्रिय स्वामी । मारहिं मोहि कुमारग गामी ॥ २ ॥
जिन्ह मोहि मारा ते मैं मारे । तेहि पर बाँधेउँ तनयँ तुम्हारे ॥
मोहि न कछु बाँधे कइ लाजा । कीन्ह चहउँ निज प्रभु कर काजा ॥ ३ ॥
बिनती करउँ जोरि कर रावन । सुनहु मान तजि मोर सिखावन ॥
देखहु तुम्ह निज कुलहि बिचारी । भ्रम तजि भजहु भगत भय हारी ॥ ४ ॥
जाकें डर अति काल डेराई । जो सुर असुर चराचर खाई ॥
तासों बयरु कबहुँ नहिं कीजै । मोरे कहें जानकी दीजै ॥ ५ ॥

"I am aware of your glory: you had an encounter with Sahasrabāhu[1] and won distinction in your contest with Vālī[2]." Rāvaṇa heard the words of Hanumān but laughed them away. "I ate the fruit because I felt hungry and

1. (*Vide Lankā-Kāṇḍa* 23, 8).

2. Once upon a time, when Vālī was performing his Sandhyā, Rāvaṇa sought to capture him by stealing behind him. Vālī, however, got scent of his mischievous intention; and the moment Rāvaṇa approached Vālī the latter caught hold of him and held him secure in his arm-pit till he had finished his Sandhyā and Tarpaṇa (offering water to the manes). Rāvaṇa remained in that position for six months till at last Brahmā himself came to his rescue and secured his release.

broke the boughs as a monkey is wont to do. One's body, my master, is supremely dear to all; yet those wicked fellows would insist on belabouring me, so that I had no course left but to return their blows. Still your son (Meghanāda) put me in bonds; but I am not at all ashamed of being bound, keen as I am to serve the cause of my lord. I implore you with joined palms, Rāvaṇa: give up your haughtiness and heed my advice. Think of your lineage and view things in that perspective; in any case disillusion yourself and adore Him who dispels the fear of His devotees. Never antagonize Him who is a source of terror even to Death, that devours all created beings, both animate and inanimate, gods as well as demons. And return Janaka's Daughter at my request. (1–5)

दो०—प्रनतपाल रघुनायक करुना सिंधु खरारि ।
गएँ सरन प्रभु राखिहैं तव अपराध बिसारि ॥ २२ ॥

"Lord Śrī Rāma, the Slayer of Khara, is a protector of the suppliant and an ocean of compassion. Forgetting your offences, He will give you shelter if you but turn to Him for protection. (22)

चौ०—राम चरन पंकज उर धरहू । लंका अचल राजु तुम्ह करहू ॥
रिषि पुलस्ति जसु बिमल मयंका । तेहि ससि महुँ जनि होहु कलंका ॥ १ ॥
राम नाम बिनु गिरा न सोहा । देखु बिचारि त्यागि मद मोहा ॥
बसन हीन नहिं सोह सुरारी । सब भूषन भूषित बर नारी ॥ २ ॥
राम बिमुख संपति प्रभुताई । जाइ रही पाई बिनु पाई ॥
सजल मूल जिन्ह सरितन्ह नाहीं । बरषि गएँ पुनि तबहिं सुखाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
सुनु दसकंठ कहउँ पन रोपी । बिमुख राम त्राता नहिं कोपी ॥
संकर सहस बिष्नु अज तोही । सकहिं न राखि राम कर द्रोही ॥ ४ ॥

"Install the image of Śrī Rāma's lotus feet in your heart and enjoy the uninterrupted sovereignty of Laṅkā. The glory of the sage Pulastya (your grandfather) shines like the moon without its spot; be not a speck in that moon. Speech is charmless without Śrī Rāma's name. Ponder and see for yourself, casting aside arrogance and infatuation. A fair lady without clothes, O enemy of gods, does not commend herself even though adorned with all kinds of jewels. The fortune and lordship of a man who is hostile to Rāma eventually leave him even if they stay a while, and are as good as lost if acquired anew. Rivers that have no perennial source get dried up as soon as the rains are over. Listen, O ten-headed Rāvaṇa, I tell you on oath: there is none to save him who is opposed to Śrī Rāma. Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu and Brahmā* in their thousands are unable to protect you, an enemy of Śrī Rāma. (1–4)

दो०—मोहमूल बहु सूल प्रद त्यागहु तम अभिमान ।
भजहु राम रघुनायक कृपा सिंधु भगवान ॥ २३ ॥

* Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are spoken of here as part manifestations of the Supreme Deity, responsible for the creation etc. of only one of the countless millions of universes ruled over by Sri Rama, who represents the Supreme Deity.

"Abandon pride, which is the same as Tamoguṇa (darkness), rooted as it is in ignorance and is a source of considerable pain; and adore Lord Śrī Rāma, the Chief of the Raghus and an ocean of compassion." (23)

चौ०—जदपि कही कपि अति हित बानी । भगति बिबेक बिरति नय सानी ॥
बोला बिहसि महा अभिमानी । मिला हमहि कपि गुर बड़ ग्यानी ॥ १ ॥
मृत्यु निकट आई खल तोही । लागेसि अधम सिखावन मोही ॥
उलटा होइहि कह हनुमाना । मतिभ्रम तोर प्रगट मैं जाना ॥ २ ॥
सुनि कपि बचन बहुत खिसिआना । बेगि न हरहु मूढ़ कर प्राना ॥
सुनत निसाचर मारन धाए । सचिवन्ह सहित बिभीषनु आए ॥ ३ ॥
नाइ सीस करि बिनय बहूता । नीति बिरोध न मारिअ दूता ॥
आन दंड कछु करिअ गोसाँई । सबहीं कहा मंत्र भल भाई ॥ ४ ॥
सुनत बिहसि बोला दसकंधर । अंग भंग करि पठइअ बंदर ॥ ५ ॥

Although Hanumān gave him exceedingly salutary advice, full of devotion, discretion, dispassion and wisdom, the most haughty Rāvaṇa laughed and said, "We have found a most wise Guru in this monkey! (Turning towards Hanumān he continued,) Death hangs over your head, O wretch; that is why you have started exhorting me, O vile monkey." "Just the contrary is going to happen;" retorted Hanumān. "I clearly perceive that you are labouring under some mental illusion." Hearing these words of Hanumān Rāvaṇa got nettled. "Why not some of you quickly kill this fool?" As soon as the demons heard it, they rushed forward to kill him. That very moment came Vibhīṣaṇa (Rāvaṇa's youngest brother) with his counsellors. Bowing his head he made humble entreaty: "It is against all statecraft: an envoy must not be killed. He may be punished in some other way, my master." All exclaimed to one another, "This is sound counsel, brother." Hearing this the ten-headed Rāvaṇa laughed and said, "All right, the monkey may be sent back mutilated. (1—5)

दो०—कपि कें ममता पूँछ पर सबहि कहउँ समुझाइ ।
तेल बोरि पट बाँधि पुनि पावक देहु लगाइ ॥ २४ ॥

"A monkey is very fond of his tail: I tell you this secret. Therefore, swathe his tail with rags soaked in oil and then set fire to it. (24)

चौ०—पूँछ हीन बानर तहँ जाइहि । तब सठ निज नाथहि लइ आइहि ॥
जिन्ह कै कीन्हिसि बहुत बड़ाई । देखउँ मैं तिन्ह कै प्रभुताई ॥ १ ॥
बचन सुनत कपि मन मुसुकाना । भइ सहाय सारद मैं जाना ॥
जातुधान सुनि रावन बचना । लागे रचैं मूढ़ सोइ रचना ॥ २ ॥
रहा न नगर बसन घृत तेला । बाढ़ी पूँछ कीन्ह कपि खेला ॥
कौतुक कहँ आए पुरबासी । मारहिं चरन करहिं बहु हाँसी ॥ ३ ॥
बाजहिं ढोल देहिं सब तारी । नगर फेरि पुनि पूँछ प्रजारी ॥
पावक जरत देखि हनुमंता । भयउ परम लघुरूप तुरंता ॥ ४ ॥
निबुकि चढ़ेउ कपि कनक अटारीं । भईं सभीत निसाचर नारीं ॥ ५ ॥

"When the tailless monkey will go back, the wretch will bring his master with him, and I shall have an opportunity of seeing his might, whom he has so lavishly exalted." Hanumān smiled to himself on hearing these words. "Goddess Śāradā has proved helpful to me, I believe." On hearing Rāvaṇa's command the stupid demons started doing as they were bid. Not a rag was left in the city nor a drop of ghee (clarified butter) or oil, the tail had grown to such a length through Hanumān's playful gesture. The citizens thronged to see the fun; they kicked Hanumān and jeered much at him. With beating of drums and clapping of hands they took him round the city and then set fire to his tail. When Hanumān saw the fire blazing, he immediately assumed an utterly diminutive size, and slipping out of his bonds sprang to the attics of the gold palace, to the dismay of the demonesses. (1—5)

दो०—हरि प्रेरित तेहि अवसर चले मरुत उनचास।
अट्टहास करि गर्जा कपि बढ़ि लाग अकास॥ २५॥

At that moment, impelled by God, all the forty-nine* winds began to bluster. Hanumān roared with a loud laugh and swelled to such a size that he seemed to touch the sky. (25)

चौ०—देह बिसाल परम हरुआई। मंदिर तें मंदिर चढ़ धाई॥
जरइ नगर भा लोग बिहाला। झपट लपट बहु कोटि कराला॥ १॥
तात मातु हा सुनिअ पुकारा। एहिं अवसर को हमहि उबारा॥
हम जो कहा यह कपि नहिं होई। बानर रूप धरें सुर कोई॥ २॥
साधु अवग्या कर फलु ऐसा। जरइ नगर अनाथ कर जैसा॥
जारा नगरु निमिष एक माहीं। एक बिभीषन कर गृह नाहीं॥ ३॥
ता कर दूत अनल जेहिं सिरिजा। जरा न सो तेहि कारन गिरिजा॥
उलटि पलटि लंका सब जारी। कूदि परा पुनि सिंधु मझारी॥ ४॥

Though colossal in size, Hanumān appeared most nimble-bodied; he ran and sprang from palace to palace. The city was all ablaze and the people were at their wit's end. Terrible flames burst forth in myriads and piteous cries were heard everywhere: "O father! ah, my mother! Who will save us at this hour? As I said, he is no monkey but some god in the form of a monkey. Such is the result of despising a noble soul: the city is being consumed by fire as though it had no master." In the twinkling of an eye Hanumān burnt down the whole city barring the solitary house of Vibhīṣaṇa. Pārvatī, (continues Lord Śiva,) Hanumān went unscathed because he was the messenger of Him who created fire itself. He burnt the whole of Lankā from one end to the other and then leapt into the ocean. (1—4)

दो०—पूँछ बुझाइ खोइ श्रम धरि लघु रूप बहोरि।
जनकसुता कें आगें ठाढ़ भयउ कर जोरि॥ २६॥

*Our scriptures tell us that there are forty-nine varieties of winds, each presided over by a distinct god, these gods being collectively known as the Maruts. In the ordinary course it is only at the time of universal dissolution (प्रलय) that all these winds are let loose by the god of destruction.

After quenching his tail and relieving his fatigue he resumed his diminutive form and stood before Janaka's Daughter with joined palms. (26)

चौ०—मातु मोहि दीजे कछु चीन्हा । जैसें रघुनायक मोहि दीन्हा ॥
चूड़ामनि उतारि तब दयऊ । हरष समेत पवनसुत लयऊ ॥ १ ॥
कहेहु तात अस मोर प्रनामा । सब प्रकार प्रभु पूरनकामा ॥
दीन दयाल बिरिदु संभारी । हरहु नाथ मम संकट भारी ॥ २ ॥
तात सक्रसुत कथा सुनाएहु । बान प्रताप प्रभुहि समुझाएहु ॥
मास दिवस महुँ नाथु न आवा । तौ पुनि मोहि जिअत नहिं पावा ॥ ३ ॥
कहु कपि केहि बिधि राखौं प्राना । तुम्हहू तात कहत अब जाना ॥
तोहि देखि सीतलि भइ छाती । पुनि मो कहुँ सोइ दिनु सो राती ॥ ४ ॥

"Be pleased, Mother, to give me some token, such as the Lord of the Raghus gave me." She thereupon unfastened the jewel on Her head and gave it to the son of the wind-god, who gladly received it. "Convey my obeisance to Him, dear son, with these words: 'My lord is all sufficient; yet, recalling Your vow of kindness to the afflicted, relieve, O master, my grievous distress.' Repeat to Him, my son, the episode of Indra's son (Jayanta) and remind the Lord of the might of His arrows. If the Lord does not arrive here within a month, he will not find me alive. Tell me, Hanumān, how can I preserve my life; for you too, my son, now speak of going. Your sight had brought relief to my heavy heart: I have before me now the same dreary days and weary nights." (1–4)

दो०—जनकसुतहि समुझाइ करि बहु बिधि धीरजु दीन्ह ।
चरन कमल सिरु नाइ कपि गवनु राम पहिं कीन्ह ॥ २७ ॥

Reassuring Janaka's Daughter he consoled Her in many ways and, bowing his head at Her lotus feet, set forth to meet Śrī Rāma. (27)

चौ०—चलत महाधुनि गर्जेसि भारी । गर्भ स्रवहिं सुनि निसिचर नारी ॥
नाघि सिंधु एहि पारहि आवा । सबद किलिकिला कपिन्ह सुनावा ॥ १ ॥
हरषे सब बिलोकि हनुमाना । नूतन जन्म कपिन्ह तब जाना ॥
मुख प्रसन्न तन तेज बिराजा । कीन्हेसि रामचंद्र कर काजा ॥ २ ॥
मिले सकल अति भए सुखारी । तलफत मीन पाव जिमि बारी ॥
चले हरषि रघुनायक पासा । पूँछत कहत नवल इतिहासा ॥ ३ ॥
तब मधुबन भीतर सब आए । अंगद संमत मधु फल खाए ॥
रखवारे जब बरजन लागे । मुष्टि प्रहार हनत सब भागे ॥ ४ ॥

While leaving he roared aloud with such a terrible noise that the wives of the demons miscarried. Taking a leap across the ocean he reached the opposite shore and greeted his fellow-monkeys with a shrill cry of joy. They were all delighted to see Hanumān and felt as if they had been born anew. He wore a cheerful countenance and his body shone with a brilliance which

left no doubt in their mind that he had executed Śrī Rāmachandra's commission. They all met him and felt as delighted as a fish writhing with agony for lack of water would feel on getting it. They then gladly proceeded to see the Lord of the Raghus, asking and telling the latest events. On their way they all entered Sugrīva's garden called Madhuvana and with Angada's consent began to eat the luscious fruit. When the guards interfered, they were beaten with fists till they took to their heels. (1—4)

दो०—जाइ पुकारे ते सब बन उजार जुबराज।
सुनि सुग्रीव हरष कपि करि आए प्रभु काज ॥ २८ ॥

They all approached Sugrīva and complained that the Crown Prince was laying waste the royal garden. Sugrīva rejoiced to hear this; for he concluded that the monkeys must have returned after accomplishing the Lord's business. (28)

चौ०—जौं न होति सीता सुधि पाई। मधुबन के फल सकहिं कि खाई ॥
एहि बिधि मन बिचार कर राजा। आइ गए कपि सहित समाजा ॥ १ ॥
आइ सबन्हि नावा पद सीसा। मिलेउ सबन्हि अति प्रेम कपीसा ॥
पूँछी कुसल कुसल पद देखी। राम कृपाँ भा काजु बिसेषी ॥ २ ॥
नाथ काजु कीन्हेउ हनुमाना। राखे सकल कपिन्ह के प्राना ॥
सुनि सुग्रीव बहुरि तेहि मिलेऊ। कपिन्ह सहित रघुपति पहिं चलेऊ ॥ ३ ॥
राम कपिन्ह जब आवत देखा। किएँ काजु मन हरष बिसेषा ॥
फटिक सिला बैठे द्वौ भाई। परे सकल कपि चरनन्हि जाई ॥ ४ ॥

"If they had failed to get any news of Sītā, they could never dare to eat the fruit of Madhuvana." While the king was thus musing, the monkey chiefs arrived with their party. Drawing near they all bowed their head at his feet and the lord of the monkeys received them all most cordially and enquired after their welfare. "It is well with us, now that we have seen your feet. By Rāma's grace the work has been accomplished with remarkable success. It is Hanumān, Your Majesty, who did everything and saved the life of the whole monkey host." Hearing this Sugrīva embraced him again and then proceeded with all the monkeys to see the Lord of the Raghus. When Śrī Rāma saw the monkeys approaching with their mission duly accomplished, He was particularly delighted at heart. The two brothers were seated on a crystal rock and all the monkeys went and fell at Their feet. (1—4)

दो०—प्रीति सहित सब भेटे रघुपति करुना पुंज।
पूँछी कुसल नाथ अब कुसल देखि पद कंज ॥ २९ ॥

The all-merciful Lord of the Raghus embraced them all with affection and asked of their welfare. "All is well with us, now that we have seen Your lotus feet." (29)

चौ०—जामवंत कह सुनु रघुराया। जा पर नाथ करहु तुम्ह दाया ॥
ताहि सदा सुभ कुसल निरंतर। सुर नर मुनि प्रसन्न ता ऊपर ॥ १ ॥

सोइ बिजई बिनई गुन सागर । तासु सुजसु त्रैलोक उजागर ॥
प्रभु कीं कृपा भयउ सबु काजू । जन्म हमार सुफल भा आजू ॥ २ ॥
नाथ पवनसुत कीन्हि जो करनी । सहसहुँ मुख न जाइ सो बरनी ॥
पवनतनय के चरित सुहाए । जामवंत रघुपतिहि सुनाए ॥ ३ ॥
सुनत कृपानिधि मन अति भाए । पुनि हनुमान हरषि हियँ लाए ॥
कहहु तात केहि भाँति जानकी । रहति करति रच्छा स्वप्रान की ॥ ४ ॥

Said Jāmbavān, "Listen, O Lord of the Raghus; he on whom You bestow Your blessings is ever lucky and incessantly happy; gods, human beings and sages are all kind to him. He alone is victorious, modest and an ocean of virtues; his fair renown shines brightly through all the three spheres of creation. Everything has turned out well by the grace of my lord; it is only today that our birth has been consummated. The achievement of Hanumān (the son of the wind-god) cannot be described even with a thousand tongues." Jāmbavān then related to the Lord of the Raghus the charming exploits of Hanumān (the son of the wind-god). The All-merciful felt much delighted at heart to hear them and in His joy He clasped Hanumān once more to His bosom. "Tell me, dear Hanumān, how does Janaka's daughter pass her days and sustain her life ?" (1-4)

दो०—नाम पाहरू दिवस निसि ध्यान तुम्हार कपाट ।
लोचन निज पद जंत्रित जाहिं प्रान केहिं बाट ॥ ३० ॥

"Your Name keeps watch night and day, while Her continued thought of You acts as a pair of closed doors. She has Her eyes fastened on Her own feet; Her life thus finds no outlet whereby to escape. (30)

चौ०—चलत मोहि चूड़ामनि दीन्ही । रघुपति हृदयँ लाइ सोइ लीन्ही ॥
नाथ जुगल लोचन भरि बारी । बचन कहे कछु जनककुमारी ॥ १ ॥
अनुज समेत गहेहु प्रभु चरना । दीन बंधु प्रनतारति हरना ॥
मन क्रम बचन चरन अनुरागी । केहिं अपराध नाथ हौं त्यागी ॥ २ ॥
अवगुन एक मोर मैं माना । बिछुरत प्रान न कीन्ह पयाना ॥
नाथ सो नयनन्हि को अपराधा । निसरत प्रान करहिं हठि बाधा ॥ ३ ॥
बिरह अगिनि तनु तूल समीरा । स्वास जरइ छन माहिं सरीरा ॥
नयन स्रवहिं जलु निज हित लागी । जरैं न पाव देह बिरहागी ॥ ४ ॥
सीता कै अति बिपति बिसाला । बिनहिं कहें भलि दीनदयाला ॥ ५ ॥

"When I was leaving, She gave me this jewel from the top of Her head." The Lord of the Raghus took it and pressed it to His bosom. "My lord, with tears in both Her eyes Janaka's Daughter uttered the following few words: 'Embrace the feet of my lord and His younger brother crying : O befriender of the distressed, reliever of the suppliant's agony, I am devoted to Your feet in thought, word and deed; yet for what offence, my lord, have You forsaken me ? I do admit one fault of mine, that my life did not depart the moment I was separated from You. That, however, my lord, is the fault of my eyes, which forcibly prevent my life from escaping. The agony of separation from

You is like fire, my sighs fan it as a gust of wind and in between stands my body like a heap of cotton, which would have been consumed in an instant. But my eyes, in their own interest (*i.e.*, for being enabled to feast themselves on Your beauty) rain a flood of tears; that is why the body fails to catch the fire of desolation.' Sītā's distress is so overwhelmingly great, and You are so compassionate to the afflicted, that it is better not to describe it. (1—5)

दो०—निमिष निमिष करुनानिधि जाहिं कलप सम बीति ।
बेगि चलिअ प्रभु आनिअ भुज बल खल दल जीति ॥ ३१ ॥

"Each single moment, O fountain of mercy, passes like an age to Her. Therefore, march quickly, my lord, and vanquishing the miscreant crew by Your mighty arm, recover Her." (31)

चौ०—सुनि सीता दुख प्रभु सुख अयना । भरि आए जल राजिव नयना ॥
बचन कायँ मन मम गति जाही । सपनेहुँ बूझिअ बिपति कि ताही ॥ १ ॥
कह हनुमंत बिपति प्रभु सोई । जब तव सुमिरन भजन न होई ॥
केतिक बात प्रभु जातुधान की । रिपुहि जीति आनिबी जानकी ॥ २ ॥
सुनु कपि तोहि समान उपकारी । नहिं कोउ सुर नर मुनि तनुधारी ॥
प्रति उपकार करौं का तोरा । सनमुख होइ न सकत मन मोरा ॥ ३ ॥
सुनु सुत तोहि उरिन मैं नाहीं । देखेउँ करि बिचार मन माहीं ॥
पुनि पुनि कपिहि चितव सुरत्राता । लोचन नीर पुलक अति गाता ॥ ४ ॥

When the all-blissful Lord heard of Sītā's agony, tears rushed to His lotus eyes. "Do you think anyone who depends on me in thought, word and deed can ever dream of adversity?" Said Hanumān: "There is no misfortune other than ceasing to remember and adore You. Of what account are the demons to You? Routing the enemy You will surely bring back Janaka's Daughter." "No one endowed with a body,—a god, human being or sage,—has put me under such obligation, Hanumān, as you have done. Even my mind shrinks to face you; how, then, can I repay your obligation? Listen, my son: I have thought over the question and concluded that the debt which I owe you cannot be repaid." Again and again as the Protector of the gods gazed on Hanumān His eyes filled with tears and His body was overpowered with a thrill of emotion. (1—4)

दो०—सुनि प्रभु बचन बिलोकि मुख गात हरषि हनुमंत ।
चरन परेउ प्रेमाकुल त्राहि त्राहि भगवंत ॥ ३२ ॥

Even as Hanumān listened to the words of his lord and gazed on His countenance he experienced a thrill of joy all over his body and fell at His feet, overwhelmed with love and crying: "Save me, save me (from the tentacles of egoism), my lord." (32)

चौ०—बार बार प्रभु चहइ उठावा । प्रेम मगन तेहि उठब न भावा ॥
प्रभु कर पंकज कपि कें सीसा । सुमिरि सो दसा मगन गौरीसा ॥ १ ॥

सावधान मन करि पुनि संकर । लागे कहन कथा अति सुंदर ॥
कपि उठाइ प्रभु हृदयँ लगावा । कर गहि परम निकट बैठावा ॥ २ ॥
कहु कपि रावन पालित लंका । केहि बिधि दहेउ दुर्ग अति बंका ॥
प्रभु प्रसन्न जाना हनुमाना । बोला बचन बिगत अभिमाना ॥ ३ ॥
साखामृग कै बड़ि मनुसाई । साखा तें साखा पर जाई ॥
नाघि सिंधु हाटकपुर जारा । निसिचर गन बधि बिपिन उजारा ॥ ४ ॥
सो सब तव प्रताप रघुराई । नाथ न कछू मोरि प्रभुताई ॥ ५ ॥

Again and again the Lord sought to raise him up; he, however, was so absorbed in love that he would not rise. The lotus hand of the Lord rested on his head. Gaurī's lord (Śiva) was overcome with emotion as He called to mind Hanumān's enviable lot.* But, recovering Himself, Śiva resumed the most charming narrative. The Lord lifted up Hanumān and clasped him to His bosom; then He took him by the hand and seated him very close to Him. "Tell me, Hanumān, how could you burn Rāvaṇa's stronghold of Lankā, a most impregnable fortress ?" When Hanumān found the Lord so pleased, he replied in words altogether free from pride. "A monkey's greatest valour lies in his skipping about from one bough to another. That I should have been able to leap across the ocean, burn the gold city, kill the demon host and lay waste the Aśoka grove was all due to Your might; no credit, my lord, is due to me for the same.

(1—5)

दो०—ता कहुँ प्रभु कछु अगम नहिं जा पर तुम्ह अनुकूल ।
तव प्रभावँ बड़वानलहि जारि सकइ खलु तूल ॥ ३३ ॥

"Nothing is unattainable, my lord, to him who enjoys Your grace. Through Your might a mere shred of cotton can surely burn a submarine fire (the impossible can be made possible).

(33)

चौ०—नाथ भगति अति सुखदायनी । देहु कृपा करि अनपायनी ॥
सुनि प्रभु परम सरल कपि बानी । एवमस्तु तब कहेउ भवानी ॥ १ ॥
उमा राम सुभाउ जेहिं जाना । ताहि भजनु तजि भाव न आना ॥
यह संबाद जासु उर आवा । रघुपति चरन भगति सोइ पावा ॥ २ ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन कहहिं कपिबृंदा । जय जय जय कृपाल सुखकंदा ॥
तब रघुपति कपिपतिहि बोलावा । कहा चलैं कर करहु बनावा ॥ ३ ॥
अब बिलंबु केहि कारन कीजे । तुरत कपिन्ह कहुँ आयसु दीजे ॥
कौतुक देखि सुमन बहु बरषी । नभ तें भवन चले सुर हरषी ॥ ४ ॥

"Therefore, be pleased, my lord, to grant me unceasing Devotion, which is a source of supreme bliss." When the Lord, O Pārvatī, heard the most artless speech of Hanumān He said, "Be it so !" Umā, he who has come

* It should be remembered in this connection that Lord Śiva Himself had taken the form of Hanumān. It was, therefore, easy for Him to recall that thrilling experience.

to know the true nature of Rāma can have no relish for anything other than His worship. Even he who takes this dialogue (between Śrī Rāma and Hanumān) to heart is blessed with devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet. On hearing the words of the Lord the whole host of monkeys cried, "Glory, glory, all glory to the gracious Lord, the fountain of bliss !" The Lord of the Raghus then summoned Sugrīva (the King of the monkeys) and said, "Make preparations for the march. Why should we tarry any longer ? Issue orders to the monkeys at once." The gods who were witnessing the spectacle rained down flowers in profusion and then gladly withdrew from the lower air to their own celestial spheres. (1–4)

दो०—कपिपति बेगि बोलाए आए जूथप जूथ ।
नाना बरन अतुल बल बानर भालु बरूथ ॥ ३४ ॥

Sugrīva (the lord of the monkeys) quickly summoned the commanders of the various troops and they presented themselves in multitudes. The troops of monkeys and bears, though varying in colour, were all unequalled in strength. (34)

चौ०—प्रभु पद पंकज नावहिं सीसा । गर्जहिं भालु महाबल कीसा ॥
देखी राम सकल कपि सेना । चितइ कृपा करि राजिव नैना ॥ १ ॥
राम कृपा बल पाइ कपिंदा । भए पच्छजुत मनहुँ गिरिंदा ॥
हरषि राम तब कीन्ह पयाना । सगुन भए सुंदर सुभ नाना ॥ २ ॥
जासु सकल मंगलमय कीती । तासु पयान सगुन यह नीती ॥
प्रभु पयान जाना बैदेहीं । फरकि बाम अँग जनु कहि देहीं ॥ ३ ॥
जोइ जोइ सगुन जानकिहि होई । असगुन भयउ रावनहि सोई ॥
चला कटकु को बरनैं पारा । गर्जहिं बानर भालु अपारा ॥ ४ ॥
नख आयुध गिरि पादपधारी । चले गगन महि इच्छाचारी ॥
केहरिनाद भालु कपि करहीं । डगमगाहिं दिग्गज चिक्करहीं ॥ ५ ॥

The mighty bears and monkeys bowed their head at the Lord's lotus feet and roared. Śrī Rāma surveyed the whole monkey host and cast on them His gracious lotus-like eyes. Emboldened by His grace the monkey chiefs vied as it were with huge mountains equipped with wings. Śrī Rāma then sallied forth glad of heart and many were the delightful and auspicious omens that occurred to Him. It was in the fitness of things that good omens should appear at the time of His departure (on an expedition) whose glory itself embodies all blessings. Videha's Daughter came to know of the Lord's march; the throbbing of Her left limbs apprised Her of the same as it were. But what were good omens for Janaka's Daughter foreboded evil for Rāvaṇa*. Who could adequately describe the army as it marched with its countless monkeys and bears roaring. With no weapon other than their sharp claws, they carried rocks and trees (that they had uprooted on the way) and marched now in the air and now on land, for they had unhampered motion everywhere.

* According to the science of omens (which was most developed in this country in the remote past) the throbbing of left limbs is considered as auspicious for women but inauspicious for men.

The bears and monkeys roared like lions as they marched, while the elephants guarding the eight cardinal points shook and trumpeted. (1—5)

छं०—चिक्करहिं दिग्गज डोल महि गिरि लोल सागर खरभरे ।
मन हरष सभ गंधर्ब सुर मुनि नाग किंनर दुख टरे ॥
कटकटहिं मर्कट बिकट भट बहु कोटि कोटिन्ह धावहीं ।
जय राम प्रबल प्रताप कोसलनाथ गुन गन गावहीं ॥ १ ॥
सहि सक न भार उदार अहिपति बार बारहिं मोहई ।
गह दसन पुनि पुनि कमठ पृष्ठ कठोर सो किमि सोहई ॥
रघुबीर रुचिर प्रयान प्रस्थिति जानि परम सुहावनी ।
जनु कमठ खर्पर सर्पराज सो लिखत अबिचल पावनी ॥ २ ॥

The elephants of the eight cardinal points trumpeted, the earth rocked, the mountains trembled and the oceans were agitated. The Gandharvas, gods, sages, Nāgas and Kinnaras, all felt delighted at heart to perceive that their troubles were over. Myriads of formidable monkey warriors gnashed their teeth (in a bellicose mood); while many more millions dashed forward crying "Glory to Śrī Rāma, Kosala's lord, of mighty valour" and hymning His praises. Even the great lord of serpents (Śeṣa) found himself unable to bear the crushing weight of the belligerent troops and felt dizzy again and again. But each time he would struggle by clutching with his teeth the hard shell of the divine Tortoise. The scratches thus made by his teeth would make one imagine as if, knowing the departure of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) on His glorious expedition to be a most attractive theme, the serpent-king was inscribing its immortal and sacred story on the Tortoise's back. (1—2)

दो०—एहि बिधि जाइ कृपानिधि उतरे सागर तीर ।
जहँ तहँ लागे खान फल भालु बिपुल कपि बीर ॥ ३५ ॥

Continuing His march in this way the All-merciful arrived at the seashore and halted there. The host of valiant bears and monkeys began to guttle fruits all round there. (35)

चौ०—उहाँ निसाचर रहहिं ससंका । जब तें जारि गयउ कपि लंका ॥
निज निज गृहँ सब करहिं बिचारा । नहिं निसिचर कुल केर उबारा ॥ १ ॥
जासु दूत बल बरनि न जाई । तेहि आएँ पुर कवन भलाई ॥
दूतिन्ह सन सुनि पुरजन बानी । मंदोदरी अधिक अकुलानी ॥ २ ॥
रहसि जोरि कर पति पग लागी । बोली बचन नीति रस पागी ॥
कंत करष हरि सन परिहरहू । मोर कहा अति हित हियँ धरहू ॥ ३ ॥
समुझत जासु दूत कइ करनी । स्रवहिं गर्भ रजनीचर घरनी ॥
तासु नारि निज सचिव बोलाई । पठवहु कंत जो चहहु भलाई ॥ ४ ॥
तव कुल कमल बिपिन दुखदाई । सीता सीत निसा सम आई ॥
सुनहु नाथ सीता बिनु दीन्हें । हित न तुम्हार संभु अज कीन्हें ॥ ५ ॥

Ever since Hanumān left after burning down Lankā the demons there had lived in constant terror. In their own houses they thought, "There is no hope for the demon race now If his messenger was mighty beyond words, what good would result when the master himself enters the city?" When Mandodarī (Rāvaṇa's principal queen) heard from her female spies what the citizens were saying, she felt much perturbed. Meeting her lord in seclusion she fell at his feet and with joined palms addressed to him words steeped in wisdom: "My lord, avoid all strife with Śrī Hari. Take my words to your heart as a most salutary advice. My lord, if you seek your own welfare, call one of your ministers and send back with him the consort of that prince (Śrī Rāma), the very thought of whose messenger's doings makes the wives of the demons miscarry. Just as a frosty night spells disaster to a bed of lotuses, so Sītā has come here as a bane to your race. Listen, my lord: unless you return Sītā, not even Śambhu (Lord Śiva) and Brahmā (the creator) can be of any good to you.

(1–5)

दो०—राम बान अहि गन सरिस निकर निसाचर भेक।
जब लगि ग्रसत न तब लगि जतनु करहु तजि टेक ॥ ३६ ॥

"Rāma's arrows are like a swarm of serpents, while the demon host can only compare with frogs. Therefore, giving up obstinacy, devise some means of safety before the serpents devour them"

(36)

चौ०—श्रवन सुनी सठ ता करि बानी। बिहसा जगत बिदित अभिमानी ॥
सभय सुभाउ नारि कर साचा। मंगल महुँ भय मन अति काचा ॥ १ ॥
जौं आवइ मर्कट कटकाई। जिअहिं बिचारे निसिचर खाई ॥
कंपहिं लोकप जाकीं त्रासा। तासु नारि सभीत बड़ि हासा ॥ २ ॥
अस कहि बिहसि ताहि उर लाई। चलेउ सभाँ ममता अधिकाई ॥
मंदोदरी हृदयँ कर चिंता। भयउ कंत पर बिधि बिपरीता ॥ ३ ॥
बैठेउ सभाँ खबरि असि पाई। सिंधु पार सेना सब आई ॥
बूझेसि सचिव उचित मत कहहू। ते सब हँसे मष्ट करि रहहू ॥ ४ ॥
जितेहु सुरासुर तब श्रम नाहीं। नर बानर केहि लेखे माहीं ॥ ५ ॥

When the foolish Rāvaṇa, who was known all the world over for his haughtiness, heard Mandodarī's admonition, he roared with laughter, "A woman is timorous by nature, it is truly said. She entertains fear even on an auspicious occasion; for her mind is very weak. If the monkey host comes, the poor demons would feast on them and sustain themselves. The very guardians of the spheres tremble for fear of me; how ridiculous that you, my wife, should be afraid!" So saying he laughed and embraced her and then left for his council-chamber exhibiting great fondness for her. Mandodarī, however, felt troubled at heart and thought that heaven had turned against her lord. As he occupied his royal seat in the council-chamber, he received intelligence that all the invading host had arrived on the other side of the ocean. He thereupon asked his councillors: "Give me proper advice." They, however, laughed and submitted, "Only remain quiet, my lord Your Majesty experienced no difficulty when you conquered the gods and demons. Of what account, then, can men and monkeys be?"

(1–5)

दो०—सचिव बैद गुर तीनि जौं प्रिय बोलहिं भय आस ।
राज धर्म तन तीनि कर होइ बेगिहीं नास ॥ ३७ ॥

When a minister, a physician and a religious preceptor—these three use pleasing words from fear or hope of reward, the result is that dominion, health and faith—all the three forthwith go to the dogs. (37)

चौ०—सोइ रावन कहुँ बनी सहाई । अस्तुति करहिं सुनाइ सुनाई ॥
अवसर जानि बिभीषनु आवा । भ्राता चरन सीसु तेहिं नावा ॥ १ ॥
पुनि सिरु नाइ बैठ निज आसन । बोला बचन पाइ अनुसासन ॥
जौ कृपाल पूँछिहु मोहि बाता । मति अनुरूप कहउँ हित ताता ॥ २ ॥
जो आपन चाहै कल्याना । सुजसु सुमति सुभ गति सुख नाना ॥
सो परनारि लिलार गोसाईं । तजउ चउथि के चंद कि नाईं ॥ ३ ॥
चौदह भुवन एक पति होई । भूतद्रोह तिष्टइ नहिं सोई ॥
गुन सागर नागर नर जोऊ । अलप लोभ भल कहइ न कोऊ ॥ ४ ॥

It was such a contingency that presented itself before Rāvaṇa. They all extolled him only to his face. Perceiving it to be an opportune hour, Vibhīṣaṇa (Rāvaṇa's youngest brother) arrived and bowed his head at his brother's feet. Bowing his head once more he occupied his own seat and, when ordered to speak, addressed him thus: "Since Your gracious Majesty has asked me my opinion I tender it, dear brother, according to my own lights and in your own interest. Let him who seeks after his welfare, good reputation, wisdom, a good destiny after his death and joys of various kinds turn his eyes away from the brow of another's wife even as one should refuse to see the moon on the fourth night (of the bright half) of a lunar month. Even though a man happened to be the sole lord of the fourteen spheres, he would certainly fall if he turned hostile to living beings. No one will speak well of a man who has the slightest avarice even if he were an ocean of virtues and clever too. (1-4)

दो०—काम क्रोध मद लोभ सब नाथ नरक के पंथ ।
सब परिहरि रघुबीरहि भजहु भजहिं जेहि संत ॥ ३८ ॥

"Lust, anger, vanity and covetousness are all paths leading to hell. Abjuring all these adore the Hero of Raghu's line, whom saints worship. (38)

चौ०—तात राम नहिं नर भूपाला । भुवनेस्वर कालहु कर काला ॥
ब्रह्म अनामय अज भगवंता । ब्यापक अजित अनादि अनंता ॥ १ ॥
गो द्विज धेनु देव हितकारी । कृपा सिंधु मानुष तनुधारी ॥
जन रंजन भंजन खल ब्राता । बेद धर्म रच्छक सुनु भ्राता ॥ २ ॥
ताहि बयरु तजि नाइअ माथा । प्रनतारति भंजन रघुनाथा ॥
देहु नाथ प्रभु कहुँ बैदेही । भजहु राम बिनु हेतु सनेही ॥ ३ ॥
सरन गएँ प्रभु ताहु न त्यागा । बिस्व द्रोह कृत अघ जेहि लागा ॥
जासु नाम त्रय ताप नसावन । सोइ प्रभु प्रगट समुझु जियँ रावन ॥ ४ ॥

"Śrī Rāma, dear brother, is no mere human king; He is the Lord of the universe and the Death of Death himself. He is the Brahma (Absolute) who is free from the malady of Maya, the unborn God, all-pervading, invincible, without beginning or end. An ocean of compassion, He has assumed the form of a human being for the good of Earth, the Brahman, the cow and the gods. Listen, brother: He delights His devotees and breaks the ranks of the impious and is the champion of the Vedas and true religion. Giving up enmity with Him, bow your head to Him; for the Lord of the Raghus relieves the distress of those who seek refuge in Him. My master, restore Videha's Daughter to the Lord Śrī Rāma, and adore Him, the disinterested friend of all. On being approached, He forsakes not even him who has incurred sin by wishing ill to the whole world. Bear this in mind, Rāvana: the same Lord whose Name destroys the threefold agony has manifested Himself (in human form). (1–4)

दो॰—बार बार पद लागउँ बिनय करउँ दससीस ।
परिहरि मान मोह मद भजहु कोसलाधीस ॥ ३९ (क) ॥
मुनि पुलस्ति निज सिष्य सन कहि पठई यह बात ।
तुरत सो मैं प्रभु सन कही पाइ सुअवसरु तात ॥ ३९ (ख) ॥

"Again and again I fall at your feet and pray you, Rāvana: abandoning pride, infatuation and arrogance, adore the Lord of Kosala. The sage Pulasti (our grandfather) had sent this message to us through a disciple of his. Availing myself of this golden opportunity, dear brother, I have immediately conveyed it to you." (39 A-B)

चौ॰—माल्यवंत अति सचिव सयाना । तासु बचन सुनि अति सुख माना ॥
तात अनुज तव नीति बिभूषन । सो उर धरहु जो कहत बिभीषन ॥ १ ॥
रिपु उतकरष कहत सठ दोऊ । दूरि न करहु इहाँ हइ कोऊ ॥
माल्यवंत गृह गयउ बहोरी । कहइ बिभीषनु पुनि कर जोरी ॥ २ ॥
सुमति कुमति सब कें उर रहहीं । नाथ पुरान निगम अस कहहीं ॥
जहाँ सुमति तहँ संपति नाना । जहाँ कुमति तहँ बिपति निदाना ॥ ३ ॥
तव उर कुमति बसी बिपरीता । हित अनहित मानहु रिपु प्रीता ॥
कालराति निसिचर कुल केरी । तेहि सीता पर प्रीति घनेरी ॥ ४ ॥

Rāvaṇa had a very old and sagacious minister named Mālyavān. He felt much gratified to hear Vibhīṣaṇa's words. "Your younger brother, dear son, is the very ornament of wisdom. Therefore, take to heart what Vibhīṣaṇa says." "Both these fools glorify the enemy! Is there no one here who will remove them out of my sight?" Mālyavān thereupon returned to his residence, while Vibhīṣaṇa began again with joined palms: "Wisdom and unwisdom dwell in the heart of all: so declare the Purāṇas and Vedas, my lord. Where there is wisdom, prosperity of every kind reigns; and where there is unwisdom misfortune is the inevitable end. Perversity has obviously taken possession of your heart; that is why you account your friends as foes and your enemies as friends. And that is why you are so very fond of Sītā, who is the very night of destruction* for the demon race. (1–4)

**Kalaratri* literally means the night preceding universal destruction at the end of a Kalpa or the span of life of the universe.

दो०—तात चरन गहि मागउँ राखहु मोर दुलार।
सीता देहु राम कहुँ अहित न होइ तुम्हार ॥ ४० ॥

"Clasping your feet I beseech you: grant this prayer of mine as a token of affection for me. Restore Sītā to Rāma so that no harm may come to you." (40)

चौ०—बुध पुरान श्रुति संमत बानी। कही बिभीषन नीति बखानी ॥
सुनत दसानन उठा रिसाई। खल तोहि निकट मृत्यु अब आई ॥ १ ॥
जिअसि सदा सठ मोर जिआवा। रिपु कर पच्छ मूढ़ तोहि भावा ॥
कहसि न खल अस को जग माहीं। भुज बल जाहि जिता मैं नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
मम पुर बसि तपसिन्ह पर प्रीती। सठ मिलु जाइ तिन्हहि कहु नीती ॥
अस कहि कीन्हेसि चरन प्रहारा। अनुज गहे पद बारहिं बारा ॥ ३ ॥
उमा संत कइ इहइ बड़ाई। मंद करत जो करइ भलाई ॥
तुम्ह पितु सरिस भलेहिं मोहि मारा। रामु भजें हित नाथ तुम्हारा ॥ ४ ॥
सचिव संग लै नभ पथ गयऊ। सबहि सुनाइ कहत अस भयऊ ॥ ५ ॥

Vibhīṣaṇa spoke wisdom and that too in words that had the approval of the wise, as well as of the Purāṇas and Vedas. Rāvaṇa, however, rose in a fury as soon as he heard them. "O wretch, your death is imminent now. O fool, you have always lived on my generosity; yet, O dullard, you have favoured the enemy's cause. Tell me, wretch, if there is any one in this world whom I have failed to conquer by the might of my arm. Dwelling in my capital you cherish love for the hermits! If so, go and join hands with them, O fool, and teach wisdom to them." So saying, he kicked his younger brother, who in his turn clasped his brother's feet again and again. Umā, here lies the greatness of a saint, who returns good for evil. "It is well you have beaten me, since you are like a father to me. But your welfare, my lord, lies in adoring Śrī Rāma." Taking his ministers with him Vibhīṣaṇa departed through the air exclaiming so as to make himself heard by all:— (1–5)

दो०—रामु सत्यसंकल्प प्रभु सभा कालबस तोरि।
मैं रघुबीर सरन अब जाउँ देहु जनि खोरि ॥ ४१ ॥

"Śrī Rāma is true to His resolve and all-powerful; while your councillors are all doomed. I, therefore, now betake myself to the Hero of Raghu's line for protection; blame me no more." (41)

चौ०—अस कहि चला बिभीषनु जबहीं। आयूहीन भए सब तबहीं ॥
साधु अवग्या तुरत भवानी। कर कल्यान अखिल कै हानी ॥ १ ॥
रावन जबहिं बिभीषन त्यागा। भयउ बिभव बिनु तबहिं अभागा ॥
चलेउ हरषि रघुनायक पाहीं। करत मनोरथ बहु मन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
देखिहउँ जाइ चरन जलजाता। अरुन मृदुल सेवक सुखदाता ॥
जे पद परसि तरी रिषिनारी। दंडक कानन पावनकारी ॥ ३ ॥
जे पद जनकसुताँ उर लाए। कपट कुरंग संग धर धाए ॥
हर उर सर सरोज पद जेई। अहोभाग्य मैं देखिहउँ तेई ॥ ४ ॥

No sooner had Vibhīṣaṇa left with these words than the doom of them all was sealed. Disrespect to a saint, Pārvatī, immediately robs one of all blessings. The moment Rāvaṇa abandoned Vibhīṣaṇa the wretch lost all his glory. Indulging in many expectations Vibhīṣaṇa, however, gladly proceeded to the Lord of the Raghus. "On reaching there I will behold those lotus feet with ruddy soles, so soft and so delightful to the devotees. Nay, I will behold those feet whose very touch redeemed the Ṛṣi's wife (Ahalyā), that hallowed the Daṇḍaka forest, that Janaka's Daughter has locked up in Her bosom, that chased the delusive deer and that dwell as a pair of lotuses in the lake of Śiva's heart. I am really blessed that I am going to see those very feet. (1–4)

दो०—जिन्ह पायन्ह के पादुकन्हि भरतु रहे मन लाइ।
ते पद आजु बिलोकिहउँ इन्ह नयनन्हि अब जाइ॥ ४२॥

"I will go today and presently behold with these eyes of mine those very feet in whose wooden sandals Bharata's mind remains absorbed !" (42)

चौ०—एहि बिधि करत सप्रेम बिचारा। आयउ सपदि सिंधु एहिं पारा॥
कपिन्ह बिभीषनु आवत देखा। जाना कोउ रिपु दूत बिसेषा॥ १॥
ताहि राखि कपीस पहिं आए। समाचार सब ताहि सुनाए॥
कह सुग्रीव सुनहु रघुराई। आवा मिलन दसानन भाई॥ २॥
कह प्रभु सखा बूझिऐ काहा। कहइ कपीस सुनहु नरनाहा॥
जानि न जाइ निसाचर माया। कामरूप केहि कारन आया॥ ३॥
भेद हमार लेन सठ आवा। राखिअ बाँधि मोहि अस भावा॥
सखा नीति तुम्ह नीकि बिचारी। मम पन सरनागत भयहारी॥ ४॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन हरष हनुमाना। सरनागत बच्छल भगवाना॥ ५॥

Cherishing such fond expectations Vibhīṣaṇa instantly crossed over to the other side of the ocean (where Śrī Rāma had encamped with His host). When the monkeys saw Vibhīṣaṇa coming, they took him for some special messenger of the enemy. Detaining him outside they approached Sugrīva (the lord of the monkeys) and told him all the news. Said Sugrīva, "Listen, O Lord of the Raghus: Rāvaṇa's brother (Vibhīṣaṇa) has come to see You." The Lord, however, asked, "What do you think of the matter, my friend ?" The lord of the monkeys replied, "Listen, O Ruler of men: the wiles of these demons are beyond one's comprehension. One does not know wherefore he has come, capable as he is of taking any form he likes. Obviously the fool has come to spy out our secrets; what appeals to me, therefore, is that he should be taken prisoner and detained." "Friend, you have thought out a wise course; but My vow is to dispel all fears from the mind of those who seek refuge in Me." Hanumān rejoiced to hear these words of the Lord, who cherished paternal affection for His protégé. (1–5)

दो०—सरनागत कहुँ जे तजहिं निज अनहित अनुमानि।
ते नर पावँर पापमय तिन्हहि बिलोकत हानि॥ ४३॥

"Those people who forsake a suppliant, apprehending evil from him are vile and sinful; their very sight is abominable. (43)

चौ०—कोटि बिप्र बध लागहिं जाहू । आएँ सरन तजउँ नहिं ताहू ॥
सनमुख होइ जीव मोहि जबहीं । जन्म कोटि अघ नासहिं तबहीं ॥ १ ॥
पापवंत कर सहज सुभाऊ । भजनु मोर तेहि भाव न काऊ ॥
जौं पै दुष्टहृदय सोइ होई । मोरें सनमुख आव कि सोई ॥ २ ॥
निर्मल मन जन सो मोहि पावा । मोहि कपट छल छिद्र न भावा ॥
भेद लेन पठवा दससीसा । तबहुँ न कछु भय हानि कपीसा ॥ ३ ॥
जग महुँ सखा निसाचर जेते । लछिमनु हनइ निमिष महुँ तेते ॥
जौं सभीत आवा सरनाईं । रखिहउँ ताहि प्रान की नाईं ॥ ४ ॥

"I will not abandon even the murderer of myriads of Brahmans, if he seeks refuge in Me. The moment a creature turns its face towards Me the sins incurred by it through millions of lives are washed away. A sinner by his very nature is averse to My worship. Had Vibhīṣaṇa been wicked at heart, could he ever dare to approach Me ? That man alone who has a pure mind can attain to Me; I have an aversion for duplicity, wiles and censoriousness. Even if Rāvaṇa has sent him to find out our secrets, we have nothing to fear or lose, O lord of the monkeys. Lakṣmaṇa, O My friend, can dispose of in a trice all the demons the world contains. And if he has sought shelter with Me out of fear, I will cherish him as My own life. (1—4)

दो०—उभय भाँति तेहि आनहु हँसि कह कृपानिकेत ।
जय कृपाल कहि कपि चले अंगद हनू समेत ॥ ४४ ॥

"In either case bring him here", the All-merciful laughed and said. "Glory to the merciful Lord", cried the monkeys and proceeded with Angada and Hanumān (to usher in Vibhīṣaṇa). (44)

चौ०—सादर तेहि आगें करि बानर । चले जहाँ रघुपति करुनाकर ॥
दूरिहि ते देखे द्वौ भ्राता । नयनानंद दान के दाता ॥ १ ॥
बहुरि राम छबिधाम बिलोकी । रहेउ ठटुकि एकटक पल रोकी ॥
भुज प्रलंब कंजारुन लोचन । स्यामल गात प्रनत भय मोचन ॥ २ ॥
सिंघ कंध आयत उर सोहा । आनन अमित मदन मन मोहा ॥
नयन नीर पुलकित अति गाता । मन धरि धीर कही मृदु बाता ॥ ३ ॥
नाथ दसानन कर मैं भ्राता । निसिचर बंस जनम सुरत्राता ॥
सहज पापप्रिय तामस देहा । जथा उलूकहि तम पर नेहा ॥ ४ ॥

The monkeys respectfully placed Vibhīṣaṇa ahead of them and proceeded to the place where the all-merciful Lord of the Raghus was. Vibhīṣaṇa beheld from a distance the two brothers who ravished the eyes of all. Again as he beheld Śrī Rāma, the home of beauty, he stopped winking and stood stockstill with his gaze intently fixed on the Lord. He had exceptionally long arms, eyes

resembling the red lotus and swarthy limbs that rid the suppliant of all fear. His lion-like shoulders and broad chest exercised great charm, while His countenance bewitched the mind of countless Cupids. The sight brought tears to his eyes and a deep thrill ran through his body. He, however, composed his mind and spoke in gentle accents: "My lord, I am Rāvaṇa's brother. Having been born in the demon race, O Protector of gods, my body has the element of Tamas (inertia and ignorance) preponderating in it and I have a natural affinity for sins even as an owl is fond of darkness. (1—4)

दो०—श्रवन सुजसु सुनि आयउँ प्रभु भंजन भव भीर।
त्राहि त्राहि आरति हरन सरन सुखद रघुबीर॥ ४५॥

"Having heard with my own ears of Your fair renown I have come to You with the belief that my lord (You) dissipates the fear of rebirth. Save me, save me, O Hero of Raghu's line, reliever of distress, delighter of those who take refuge in You." (45)

चौ०—अस कहि करत दंडवत देखा। तुरत उठे प्रभु हरष बिसेषा॥
दीन बचन सुनि प्रभु मन भावा। भुज बिसाल गहि हृदयँ लगावा॥ १॥
अनुज सहित मिलि ढिग बैठारी। बोले बचन भगत भय हारी॥
कहु लंकेस सहित परिवारा। कुसल कुठाहर बास तुम्हारा॥ २॥
खल मंडलीं बसहु दिनु राती। सखा धरम निबहइ केहि भाँती॥
मैं जानउँ तुम्हारि सब रीती। अति नय निपुन न भाव अनीती॥ ३॥
बरु भल बास नरक कर ताता। दुष्ट संग जनि देइ बिधाता॥
अब पद देखि कुसल रघुराया। जौं तुम्ह कीन्हि जानि जन दाया॥ ४॥

When the Lord saw Vibhīṣaṇa falling prostrate with these words, He immediately started up much delighted. The Lord rejoiced at heart to hear his humble speech and, taking him in His long arms, clasped him to His bosom. Meeting him with His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) He seated him by His side and spoke words that dispelled the fear of His devotee: "Tell me, king of Laṅkā, if all is well with you and your family, placed as you are in vicious surroundings. You live day and night in the midst of evil-minded persons; I wonder how you are able to maintain your piety, my friend. I know all your ways: you are a past master in correct behaviour and are averse to wrong-doing. It is much better to live in hell, dear Vibhīṣaṇa; but may Providence never place us in the company of the wicked." "All is well with me now that I have beheld Your feet, O Lord of the Raghus, and since You have shown Your mercy to me, recognizing me as Your servant. (1—4)

दो०—तब लगि कुसल न जीव कहुँ सपनेहुँ मन बिश्राम।
जब लगि भजत न राम कहुँ सोक धाम तजि काम॥ ४६॥

"There can be no happiness for a creature nor can its mind know any peace even in a dream so long as it does not relinquish desire, which is an abode of sorrow, and adore Śrī Rāma (Yourself). (46)

चौ०—तब लगि हृदयँ बसत खल नाना । लोभ मोह मच्छर मद माना ॥
जब लगि उर न बसत रघुनाथा । धरें चाप सायक कटि भाथा ॥ १ ॥
ममता तरुन तमी अँधिआरी । राग द्वेष उलूक सुखकारी ॥
तब लगि बसति जीव मन माहीं । जब लगि प्रभु प्रताप रबि नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
अब मैं कुसल मिटे भय भारे । देखि राम पद कमल तुम्हारे ॥
तुम्ह कृपाल जा पर अनुकूला । ताहि न ब्याप त्रिबिध भव सूला ॥ ३ ॥
मैं निसिचर अति अधम सुभाऊ । सुभ आचरनु कीन्ह नहिं काऊ ॥
जासु रूप मुनि ध्यान न आवा । तेहिं प्रभु हरषि हृदयँ मोहि लावा ॥ ४ ॥

"That villainous crew—greed, infatuation, jealousy, arrogance and pride—haunts the mind only so long as the Lord of the Raghus does not take up His abode there, armed with a bow and arrow and with a quiver fastened at His waist. Attachment to the world is like a dark night fully advanced, which is so delightful to the owls of attraction and aversion; it abides in the heart of a creature only so long as the sun of the Lord's glory does not shine there. Having seen Your lotus feet, O Rāma, I am now quite well and my grave fears have been set at rest. The threefold torments of mundane existence cease to have any effect on him who enjoys Your favour, my gracious lord. I am a demon vilest of nature and have never done any good act. Yet the Lord whose beauty even sages fail to perceive with their mind's eye has been pleased to clasp me to His bosom. (1–4)

दो०—अहोभाग्य मम अमित अति राम कृपा सुख पुंज ।
देखेउँ नयन बिरंचि सिव सेब्य जुगल पद कंज ॥ ४७ ॥

"Ah, I am blessed beyond measure, O all-gracious and all-blissful Rāma, in that I have beheld with my own eyes the lotus feet which are worthy of adoration even to Brahmā and Śiva." (47)

चौ०—सुनहु सखा निज कहउँ सुभाऊ । जान भुसुंडि संभु गिरिजाऊ ॥
जौं नर होइ चराचर द्रोही । आवै सभय सरन तकि मोही ॥ १ ॥
तजि मद मोह कपट छल नाना । करउँ सद्य तेहि साधु समाना ॥
जननी जनक बंधु सुत दारा । तनु धनु भवन सुहृद परिवारा ॥ २ ॥
सब कै ममता ताग बटोरी । मम पद मनहि बाँध बरि डोरी ॥
समदरसी इच्छा कछु नाहीं । हरष सोक भय नहिं मन माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
अस सज्जन मम उर बस कैसें । लोभी हृदयँ बसइ धनु जैसें ॥
तुम्ह सारिखे संत प्रिय मोरें । धरउँ देह नहिं आन निहोरें ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, My friend: I tell you My nature, which is known to Bhusundi, Śambhu (Lord Śiva) and Girijā (Parvatī) too If a man, even though he has been an enemy of the whole animate and inanimate creation, comes terror-stricken to Me, seeking My protection and discarding vanity, infatuation, hypocrisy and trickeries of various kinds, I speedily make him the very like of a saint. The ties of affection that bind a man to his mother, father, brother,

son, wife, body, wealth, house, friends and relations are like so many threads which a pious soul gathers up and twists into a string wherewith he binds his soul to My feet. Nay, he looks upon all with the same eye and has no craving and his mind is free from joy, grief and fear. A saint of this description abides in My heart even as mammon resides in the heart of a covetous man. Only saints of your type are dear to Me; for the sake of none else do I body Myself forth. (1–4)

दो०—सगुन उपासक परहित निरत नीति दृढ़ नेम ।
ते नर प्रान समान मम जिन्ह कें द्विज पद प्रेम ॥ ४८ ॥

"Those men who worship My personal form, are intent on doing good to others, firmly tread the path of righteousness, and are steadfast in their vow and devoted to the feet of the Brahmans are dear to Me as life. (48)

चौ०—सुनु लंकेस सकल गुन तोरें । तातें तुम्ह अतिसय प्रिय मोरें ॥
राम बचन सुनि बानर जूथा । सकल कहहिं जय कृपा बरूथा ॥ १ ॥
सुनत बिभीषनु प्रभु कै बानी । नहिं अघात श्रवनामृत जानी ॥
पद अंबुज गहि बारहिं बारा । हृदयँ समात न प्रेमु अपारा ॥ २ ॥
सुनहु देव सचराचर स्वामी । प्रनतपाल उर अंतरजामी ॥
उर कछु प्रथम बासना रही । प्रभु पद प्रीति सरित सो बही ॥ ३ ॥
अब कृपाल निज भगति पावनी । देहु सदा सिव मन भावनी ॥
एवमस्तु कहि प्रभु रनधीरा । मागा तुरत सिंधु कर नीरा ॥ ४ ॥
जदपि सखा तव इच्छा नाहीं । मोर दरसु अमोघ जग माहीं ॥
अस कहि राम तिलक तेहि सारा । सुमन बृष्टि नभ भई अपारा ॥ ५ ॥

"Listen, O king of Laṅkā; you possess all the above virtues; hence you are extremely dear to Me." On hearing the words of Śrī Rama all the assembled monkeys exclaimed, "Glory to the All-merciful !" Vibhīṣana's eagerness to hear the Lord's speech, which was all nectar to his ears, knew no satiety. He clasped His lotus feet again and again, his heart bursting with boundless joy. "Listen, my lord, Ruler of the whole creation—animate as well as inanimate, Protector of the suppliant and Knower of all hearts: I did have some lurking desire in my heart before; but the same has been washed away by the stream of devotion to the Lord's feet. Now, my gracious lord, grant me such pure devotion (to Your feet) as that which gladdens Śiva's heart." "So be it", replied the Lord, staunch in fight, and immediately asked for the water of the sea. "Even though, My friend, you have no craving, My sight in this world never fails to bring its reward." So saying, Śrī Rāma applied on his forehead the sacred mark of sovereignty and a copious shower of flowers rained down from the heavens. (1–5)

दो०—रावन क्रोध अनल निज स्वास समीर प्रचंड ।
जरत बिभीषनु राखेउ दीन्हेउ राजु अखंड ॥ ४९ (क) ॥
जो संपति सिव रावनहि दीन्हि दिएँ दस माथ ।
सोइ संपदा बिभीषनहि सकुचि दीन्हि रघुनाथ ॥ ४९ (ख) ॥

Thus did the Lord of the Raghus save Vibhīṣaṇa from being consumed by the fire of Rāvaṇa's wrath, fanned to fury by his own (Vibhīṣaṇa's) breath (words), and bestowed on him unbroken sovereignty. Nay, He conferred on Vibhīṣaṇa with much diffidence the same fortune which Lord Śiva had bestowed on Rāvaṇa after the latter had offered his ten heads to Him in a sacrifice. (49 A-B)

चौ०—अस प्रभु छाड़ि भजहिं जे आना । ते नर पसु बिनु पूँछ बिषाना ॥
निज जन जानि ताहि अपनावा । प्रभु सुभाव कपि कुल मन भावा ॥ १ ॥
पुनि सर्बग्य सर्ब उर बासी । सर्बरूप सब रहित उदासी ॥
बोले बचन नीति प्रतिपालक । कारन मनुज दनुज कुल घालक ॥ २ ॥
सुनु कपीस लंकापति बीरा । केहि बिधि तरिअ जलधि गंभीरा ॥
संकुल मकर उरग झष जाती । अति अगाध दुस्तर सब भाँती ॥ ३ ॥
कह लंकेस सुनहु रघुनायक । कोटि सिंधु सोषक तव सायक ॥
जद्यपि तदपि नीति असि गाई । बिनय करिअ सागर सन जाई ॥ ४ ॥

Those men who worship anyone else, giving up such a (benign) lord, are mere beasts without a tail and a pair of horns. Recognizing Vibhīṣaṇa as His own man the Lord accepted him in His service; the amiability of His disposition gladdened the heart of the whole monkey host. Then the All-wise, who dwells in the heart of all, is manifest in all forms, though bereft of all and unconcerned, and who had appeared in human semblance with a specific motive and as the exterminator of the demon race, spoke words strictly observing the rules of decorum: "Listen, O lord of the monkeys and O valiant sovereign of Lankā, how are we to cross the deep ocean full of alligators, snakes and all varieties of fishes, most unfathomable and difficult to cross in every way ?" "Listen, O Lord of the Raghus," replied the king of Lankā, "Although Your arrow itself can dry up innumerable oceans, yet propriety demands that You should approach the ocean and request the deity presiding over it (to allow You a passage). (1—4)

दो०—प्रभु तुम्हार कुलगुर जलधि कहिहि उपाय बिचारि ।
बिनु प्रयास सागर तरिहि सकल भालु कपि धारि ॥ ५० ॥

"My lord, the deity presiding over the ocean is an ancestor of Yours; hence he will think over the question and suggest some means (of crossing the ocean).* The whole host of bears and monkeys will thus be able to cross the ocean without much ado." (50)

चौ०—सखा कही तुम्ह नीकि उपाई । करिअ दैव जौं होइ सहाई ॥
मंत्र न यह लछिमन मन भावा । राम बचन सुनि अति दुख पावा ॥ १ ॥
नाथ दैव कर कवन भरोसा । सोषिअ सिंधु करिअ मन रोसा ॥
कादर मन कहुँ एक अधारा । दैव दैव आलसी पुकारा ॥ २ ॥

* It is stated in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmiki and other scriptures that the bed of the ocean was dug by King Sagara, hence it is known by the name of 'Sāgara'. King Sagara was an ancestor of Śrī Rāma and thus the deity presiding over the ocean is also spoken of by Vibhīṣaṇa as a forefather of the Lord.

सुनत बिहसि बोले रघुबीरा। ऐसेहिं करब धरहु मन धीरा॥
अस कहि प्रभु अनुजहि समुझाई। सिंधु समीप गए रघुराई॥ ३॥
प्रथम प्रनाम कीन्ह सिरु नाई। बैठे पुनि तट दर्भ डसाई॥
जबहिं बिभीषन प्रभु पहिं आए। पाछें रावन दूत पठाए॥ ४॥

"Friend, you have suggested an excellent plan; let us try it and see if Providence helps it." This counsel, however, did not find favour with Lakṣmaṇa, who was greatly pained to hear Śrī Rāma's words. "No reliance can be placed on the freaks of fortune. Fill your mind with indignation and dry up the ocean. Fate is a crutch for the mind of cowards alone; it is the indolent who proclaim their faith in fate." Hearing this the Hero of Raghu's line laughed and said, "We shall do accordingly; pray, ease your mind." Reassuring His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) with these words the Lord of the Raghus went to the seashore. First of all He bowed His head and greeted the ocean and then, spreading some Kuśa grass on the shore, took His seat thereon. As soon as Vibhīṣaṇa proceeded towards the Lord, Rāvaṇa sent spies after him. (1–4)

दो०—सकल चरित तिन्ह देखे धरें कपट कपि देह।
प्रभु गुन हृदयँ सराहहिं सरनागत पर नेह॥ ५१॥

Assuming the false appearance of monkeys they witnessed all the doings of Śrī Rāma and praised in their heart the Lord's virtues and His fondness for those who come to Him for protection. (51)

चौ०—प्रगट बखानहिं राम सुभाऊ। अति सप्रेम गा बिसरि दुराऊ॥
रिपु के दूत कपिन्ह तब जाने। सकल बाँधि कपीस पहिं आने॥ १॥
कह सुग्रीव सुनहु सब बानर। अंग भंग करि पठवहु निसिचर॥
सुनि सुग्रीव बचन कपि धाए। बाँधि कटक चहु पास फिराए॥ २॥
बहु प्रकार मारन कपि लागे। दीन पुकारत तदपि न त्यागे॥
जो हमार हर नासा काना। तेहि कोसलाधीस कै आना॥ ३॥
सुनि लछिमन सब निकट बोलाए। दया लागि हँसि तुरत छोड़ाए॥
रावन कर दीजहु यह पाती। लछिमन बचन बाचु कुलघाती॥ ४॥

They openly commenced applauding Śrī Rāma's amiability and in the intensity of their emotion forgot their disguise. The monkeys now recognized them as the enemy's spies; they bound them all and brought them in the presence of Sugrīva (the lord of the monkeys). Said Sugrīva, "Listen, all you monkeys: mutilate the demons and dismiss them." Hearing Sugrīva's command the monkeys ran and paraded them in bonds all through the camp. The monkeys then started belabouring them right and left; the demons piteously cried for help, yet the monkeys would not let them alone. "Whosoever robs us of our nose and ears, we adjure him by Śrī Rāma not to do so." When Lakṣmaṇa heard this, he called them all near him; and moved to pity he laughed and immediately had them released. "Give this note into Rāvaṇa's hands and tell him: read, destroyer of your race, what Lakṣmaṇa says. (1–4)

दो०—कहेहु मुखागर मूढ़ सन मम संदेसु उदार ।
सीता देइ मिलहु न त आवा कालु तुम्हार ॥ ५२ ॥

"Further convey to the fool by word of mouth my generous message: surrender Sītā and make peace or your hour is come." (52)

चौ०—तुरत नाइ लछिमन पद माथा । चले दूत बरनत गुन गाथा ॥
कहत राम जसु लंकाँ आए । रावन चरन सीस तिन्ह नाए ॥ १ ॥
बिहसि दसानन पूँछी बाता । कहसि न सुक आपनि कुसलाता ॥
पुनि कहु खबरि बिभीषन केरी । जाहि मृत्यु आई अति नेरी ॥ २ ॥
करत राज लंका सठ त्यागी । होइहि जव कर कीट अभागी ॥
पुनि कहु भालु कीस कटकाई । कठिन काल प्रेरित चलि आई ॥ ३ ॥
जिन्ह के जीवन कर रखवारा । भयउ मृदुल चित सिंधु बिचारा ॥
कहु तपसिन्ह कै बात बहोरी । जिन्ह के हृदयँ त्रास अति मोरी ॥ ४ ॥

Bowing their head at Lakṣmaṇa's feet the spies immediately departed, recounting the virtues of Śrī Rāma. With Śrī Rāma's praises on their lips they entered Lankā and bowed their head at Rāvaṇa's feet. The ten-headed monster laughed and asked them the news: "Report me, Śuka, your own welfare and then tell me the news about Vibhīṣaṇa, whom death has approached very near. The fool left Lankā where he was ruling; the wretch will now be crushed as a weevil with barley-grains. Tell me next all about the host of bears and monkeys, that has been driven over here by a cruel destiny. It is the poor soft-hearted sea that has stood as a protector of their lives. Lastly tell me the news about the ascetics (Rama and Laksmana) whose heart is obsessed with unceasing terror of me. (1—4)

दो०—की भइ भेंट कि फिरि गए श्रवन सुजसु सुनि मोर ।
कहसि न रिपु दल तेज बल बहुत चकित चित तोर ॥ ५३ ॥

"Did you meet them or did they beat their retreat on hearing my fair renown? Why should you not speak of the enemy's prowess and strength; your wits seem utterly dazed." (53)

चौ०—नाथ कृपा करि पूँछेहु जैसें । मानहु कहा क्रोध तजि तैसें ॥
मिला जाइ जब अनुज तुम्हारा । जातहिं राम तिलक तेहि सारा ॥ १ ॥
रावन दूत हमहि सुनि काना । कपिन्ह बाँधि दीन्हे दुख नाना ॥
श्रवन नासिका काटैं लागे । राम सपथ दीन्हें हम त्यागे ॥ २ ॥
पूँछिहु नाथ राम कटकाई । बदन कोटि सत बरनि न जाई ॥
नाना बरन भालु कपि धारी । बिकटानन बिसाल भयकारी ॥ ३ ॥
जेहिं पुर दहेउ हतेउ सुत तोरा । सकल कपिन्ह महँ तेहि बलु थोरा ॥
अमित नाम भट कठिन कराला । अमित नाग बल बिपुल बिसाला ॥ ४ ॥

"My lord, just as you have so kindly put these questions to me, so do you believe what I say and be not angry. No sooner had your younger brother (Vibhīṣaṇa) met Śrī Rāma than the latter applied the sacred mark of sovereignty on his forehead. When the monkeys heard that we were Rāvaṇa's (Your Majesty's) spies, they bound us and persecuted us in many ways. They were about to cut off our ears and nose; but when we adjured them by Rāma not to do so, they let us go. You have enquired, my lord, about Śrī Rāma's army; but a thousand million tongues would fail to describe it. It is a host of bears and monkeys of diverse hue and gruesome visage, huge and terrible. He who burnt your capital and killed your son (Akṣa) is the weakest of all the monkeys. The army includes innumerable champions with as many names, fierce and unyielding monsters of vast bulk and possessing the strength of numberless elephants.

(1–4)

दो०—द्विबिद मयंद नील नल अंगद गद बिकटासि ।
दधिमुख केहरि निसठ सठ जामवंत बलरासि ॥ ५४ ॥

"Dwivida, Mainda, Nīla, Nala, Angada, Gada, Vikaṭāsya, Dadhimukha, Kesarī, Niśaṭha, Śaṭha and the powerful Jāmbavān are some of them. (54)

चौ०—ए कपि सब सुग्रीव समाना । इन्ह सम कोटिन्ह गनइ को नाना ॥
राम कृपाँ अतुलित बल तिन्हहीं । तृन समान त्रैलोकहि गनहीं ॥ १ ॥
अस मैं सुना श्रवन दसकंधर । पदुम अठारह जूथप बंदर ॥
नाथ कटक महँ सो कपि नाहीं । जो न तुम्हहि जीतै रन माहीं ॥ २ ॥
परम क्रोध मीजहिं सब हाथा । आयसु पै न देहिं रघुनाथा ॥
सोषहिं सिंधु सहित झष ब्याला । पूरहिं न त भरि कुधर बिसाला ॥ ३ ॥
मर्दि गर्द मिलवहिं दससीसा । ऐसेइ बचन कहहिं सब कीसा ॥
गर्जहिं तर्जहिं सहज असंका । मानहुँ ग्रसन चहत हहिं लंका ॥ ४ ॥

"Each of these monkeys is as mighty as Sugrīva (the king) and there are tens of millions like them: who can dare count them ? By the grace of Śrī Rāma they are unequalled in strength and reckon the three spheres of creation as of no more account than a blade of grass. I have heard it said, Rāvaṇa, that the commanders of the various monkey-troops alone number eighteen thousand billions. In the whole host, my lord, there is not a single monkey who would not conquer you in battle. They are all wringing their hands in excess of passion; but the Lord of the Raghus does not order them (to march) 'We shall suck the ocean dry with all its fish and serpents or fill it up with huge mountains. Nay, we shall crush the ten-headed Rāvaṇa and reduce him to dust.' Such were the words that all the monkeys uttered. Fearless by nature, they roared and bullied as if they would devour Lankā.

(1–4)

दो०—सहज सूर कपि भालु सब पुनि सिर पर प्रभु राम ।
रावन काल कोटि कहुँ जीति सकहिं संग्राम ॥ ५५ ॥

"All the monkeys and bears are born warriors and, besides, they have Lord Śrī Rāma over their head. Rāvaṇa, they can conquer in battle even millions of Yamas (death personified). (55)

चौ०—राम तेज बल बुधि बिपुलाई । सेष सहस सत सकहिं न गाई ॥
सक सर एक सोषि सत सागर । तव भ्रातहि पूँछेउ नय नागर ॥ १ ॥
तासु बचन सुनि सागर पाहीं । मागत पंथ कृपा मन माहीं ॥
सुनत बचन बिहसा दससीसा । जौं असि मति सहाय कृत कीसा ॥ २ ॥
सहज भीरु कर बचन दृढ़ाई । सागर सन ठानी मचलाई ॥
मूढ़ मृषा का करसि बड़ाई । रिपु बल बुद्धि थाह मैं पाई ॥ ३ ॥
सचिव सभीत बिभीषन जाकें । बिजय बिभूति कहाँ जग ताकें ॥
सुनि खल बचन दूत रिस बाढ़ी । समय बिचारि पत्रिका काढ़ी ॥ ४ ॥
रामानुज दीन्ही यह पाती । नाथ बचाइ जुड़ावहु छाती ॥
बिहसि बाम कर लीन्ही रावन । सचिव बोलि सठ लाग बचावन ॥ ५ ॥

"A hundred thousand Śeṣas would fail to describe the greatness of Śrī Rāma's valour, strength and intelligence. With a single shaft He could dry up a hundred seas; yet, being a master of propriety, He consulted your brother (Vibhīṣaṇa) and in accordance with his suggestion He is asking passage of the ocean with a heart full of compassion." The ten-headed monster laughed to hear these words. "It was because of such wits that he (Rāma) took monkeys for his allies. That is why, confirming the advice of my brother, who is a born coward, he is persistent in demanding of the ocean (like a pet child) something which is impossible. Fool, why do you bestow false praise on the enemy, whose might and wisdom I have fathomed. Triumph and glory in this world are inaccessible to him who has a cowardly counsellor like Vibhīṣaṇa." The spy waxed angry to hear the words of the wicked monarch and taking it to be an opportune moment he took out the letter (from Lakṣmaṇa). "Śrī Rāma's younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) gave me this note; have it read, my lord, and soothe your heart." Rāvaṇa laughed when he took the letter in his left hand; and, summoning his minister, the fool asked him to read it out. (1–5)

दो०—बातन्ह मनहि रिझाइ सठ जनि घालसि कुल खीस ।
राम बिरोध न उबरसि सरन बिष्नु अज ईस ॥ ५६ (क) ॥
की तजि मान अनुज इव प्रभु पद पंकज भृंग ।
होहि कि राम सरानल खल कुल सहित पतंग ॥ ५६ (ख) ॥

Beguiling your mind with flattering words, O fool, do not bring your race to utter ruin. By courting enmity with Śrī Rāma you will not be spared even though you seek the protection of Viṣṇu, Brahmā or Śiva. Therefore, abandoning pride, like your younger brother, either seek the lotus feet of the Lord as a bee or be consumed with your family like a moth into the fire of Śrī Rāma's shafts, O wretch. (56 A-B)

चौ०—सुनत सभय मन मुख मुसुकाई। कहत दसानन सबहि सुनाई॥
भूमि परा कर गहत अकासा। लघु तापस कर बाग बिलासा॥ १॥
कह सुक नाथ सत्य सब बानी। समुझहु छाड़ि प्रकृति अभिमानी॥
सुनहु बचन मम परिहरि क्रोधा। नाथ राम सन तजहु बिरोधा॥ २॥
अति कोमल रघुबीर सुभाऊ। जद्यपि अखिल लोक कर राऊ॥
मिलत कृपा तुम्ह पर प्रभु करिही। उर अपराध न एकउ धरिही॥ ३॥
जनकसुता रघुनाथहि दीजे। एतना कहा मोर प्रभु कीजे॥
जब तेहिं कहा देन बैदेही। चरन प्रहार कीन्ह सठ तेही॥ ४॥
नाइ चरन सिरु चला सो तहाँ। कृपासिंधु रघुनायक जहाँ॥
करि प्रनामु निज कथा सुनाई। राम कृपाँ आपनि गति पाई॥ ५॥
रिषि अगस्ति कीं साप भवानी। राछस भयउ रहा मुनि ग्यानी॥
बंदि राम पद बारहिं बारा। मुनि निज आश्रम कहुँ पगु धारा॥ ६॥

Rāvaṇa was dismayed at heart as he listened to the above message but wore a feigned smile on his face and spoke aloud for all to hear: "The younger hermit's grandiloquence is just like the attempt of a man lying on the ground to clutch with hands the vault of heaven." Said Śuka, "My lord, giving up haughtiness take every word of it as true. Abandon passion and give ear to my advice: my lord, avoid a clash with Śrī Rāma. The Hero of Raghu's line is exceedingly mild of disposition, even though He is the lord of the entire universe. The Lord will shower His grace on you the moment you meet Him, and will not take to heart even a single offence of yours. Pray, restore Janaka's Daughter to Śrī Rāma; at least concede this request of mine." When Śuka asked him to surrender Videha's Daughter, the wretch kicked him. Śuka, however, bowed his head at Rāvaṇa's feet and proceeded to the place where the all-merciful Lord of the Raghus was. Making obeisance to the Lord he told Him all about himself and by Rāma's grace recovered his original state. He was an enlightened sage; it was by Agastya's curse, Pārvatī, that he had been transformed into a demon. Adoring Śrī Rāma's feet again and again the sage returned to his hermitage. (1—6)

दो०—बिनय न मानत जलधि जड़ गए तीनि दिन बीति।
बोले राम सकोप तब भय बिनु होइ न प्रीति॥ ५७॥

Although three days had elapsed, the crass ocean would not answer the Lord's prayer. Śrī Rāma thereupon indignantly said, "There can be no friendship without inspiring fear. (57)

चौ०—लछिमन बान सरासन आनू। सोषौं बारिधि बिसिख कृसानू॥
सठ सन बिनय कुटिल सन प्रीती। सहज कृपन सन सुंदर नीती॥ १॥
ममता रत सन ग्यान कहानी। अति लोभी सन बिरति बखानी॥
क्रोधिहि सम कामिहि हरि कथा। ऊसर बीज बएँ फल जथा॥ २॥
अस कहि रघुपति चाप चढ़ावा। यह मत लछिमन के मन भावा॥
संधानेउ प्रभु बिसिख कराला। उठी उदधि उर अंतर ज्वाला॥ ३॥

मकर उरग झष गन अकुलाने । जरत जंतु जलनिधि जब जाने ॥
कनक थार भरि मनि गन नाना । बिप्र रूप आयउ तजि माना ॥ ४ ॥

"Lakṣmaṇa, bring Me My bow and arrows; I will dry up the ocean with a missile presided over by the god of fire. Supplication before an idiot, friendship with a rogue, inculcating liberality on a born miser, talking wisdom to one steeped in worldliness, glorifying dispassion before a man of excessive greed, a lecture on mind-control to an irascible man and a discourse on the exploits of Śrī Hari to a libidinous person are as futile as sowing seeds in a barren land." So saying, the Lord of the Raghus strung His bow and this stand (of the Lord) delighted Lakṣmaṇa's heart. When the Lord fitted the terrible arrow to His bow, a blazing fire broke out in the heart of the ocean; the alligators, serpents and fishes felt distressed. When the god presiding over the ocean found the creatures burning, he gave up his pride and, assuming the form of a Brahman, came with a gold plate filled with all kinds of jewels.

(1—4)

दो०—काटेहिं पइ कदरी फरइ कोटि जतन कोउ सींच ।
बिनय न मान खगेस सुनु डाटेहिं पइ नव नीच ॥ ५८ ॥

Though one may take infinite pains in watering a plaintain it will not bear fruit unless it is hewed. Similarly, mark me, O king of birds, (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi,) a vile fellow heeds no prayer but yields only when reprimanded.

(58)

चौ०—सभय सिंधु गहि पद प्रभु केरे । छमहु नाथ सब अवगुन मेरे ॥
गगन समीर अनल जल धरनी । इन्ह कइ नाथ सहज जड़ करनी ॥ १ ॥
तव प्रेरित मायाँ उपजाए । सृष्टि हेतु सब ग्रंथनि गाए ॥
प्रभु आयसु जेहि कहँ जस अहई । सो तेहि भाँति रहें सुख लहई ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु भल कीन्ह मोहि सिख दीन्ही । मरजादा पुनि तुम्हरी कीन्ही ॥
ढोल गँवार सूद्र पसु नारी । सकल ताड़ना के अधिकारी ॥ ३ ॥
प्रभु प्रताप मैं जाब सुखाई । उतरिहि कटकु न मोरि बड़ाई ॥
प्रभु अग्या अपेल श्रुति गाई । करौं सो बेगि जो तुम्हहि सोहाई ॥ ४ ॥

The god presiding over the ocean clasped the Lord's feet in dismay. "Forgive, my lord, all my faults. Ether, air, fire, water and earth—all these, my lord, are dull by nature. It is Māyā (Cosmic Nature) which brought them forth for the purpose of creation under an impulse from You; so declare all the scriptures. One would attain happiness in life only by remaining where he has been placed by the Lord. My lord has done well in giving me a lesson; but You have fixed certain limits for everyone. A drum, a rustic, a Śūdra, a beast and a woman—all these deserve beating. By the Lord's glory I shall be dried up and the army will cross over: but this will bring no credit to me. Your command, however, is inviolable: thus declare the Vedas. I shall do at once what pleases You."

(1—4)

दो०—सुनत बिनीत बचन अति कह कृपाल मुसुकाइ ।
जेहि बिधि उतरै कपि कटकु तात सो कहहु उपाइ ॥ ५९ ॥

On hearing his most submissive words the All-merciful smiled and said, "Tell me, dear father, some device whereby the monkey host may cross over." (59)

चौ०—नाथ नील नल कपि द्वौ भाई । लरिकाईं रिषि आसिष पाई ॥
तिन्ह कें परस किएँ गिरि भारे । तरिहहिं जलधि प्रताप तुम्हारे ॥ १ ॥
मैं पुनि उर धरि प्रभु प्रभुताई । करिहउँ बल अनुमान सहाई ॥
एहि बिधि नाथ पयोधि बँधाइअ । जेहिं यह सुजसु लोक तिहुँ गाइअ ॥ २ ॥
एहिं सर मम उत्तर तट बासी । हतहु नाथ खल नर अघ रासी ॥
सुनि कृपाल सागर मन पीरा । तुरतहिं हरी राम रन धीरा ॥ ३ ॥
देखि राम बल पौरुष भारी । हरषि पयोनिधि भयउ सुखारी ॥
सकल चरित कहि प्रभुहि सुनावा । चरन बंदि पाथोधि सिधावा ॥ ४ ॥

"My lord, the two monkey brothers, Nīla and Nala, got a boon in their childhood from a sage. Touched by them even huge mountains will float on the ocean by Your glory. Cherishing my lord's (Your) greatness I too shall help You to the best of my ability. In this way, my lord, have the ocean bridged, so that this glorious achievement of Yours may be sung in all the three spheres of creation. With this arrow, my Lord, exterminate a race of vile criminals inhabiting my northern coast." On hearing this, Śrī Rāma, who was as tender-hearted as He was staunch in battle, immediately relieved the agony of Ocean's heart. The god presiding over the ocean was rejoiced and gratified to witness Śrī Rāma's astounding might and valour. He related to the Lord all the doings (of those villains); and bowing to His feet, Ocean took his leave.

(1–4)

छं०—निज भवन गवनेउ सिंधु श्रीरघुपतिहि यह मत भायऊ ।
यह चरित कलि मल हर जथामति दास तुलसी गायऊ ॥
सुख भवन संसय समन दवन बिषाद रघुपति गुन गना ।
तजि सकल आस भरोस गावहि सुनहि संतत सठ मना ॥

The god presiding over the ocean left for his home; the idea (of bridging the ocean) commended itself to the blessed Lord of the Raghus. This story (of Śrī Rāma's exploits in this Kāṇḍa), which wipes out the impurities of the Kali age, has been sung by Tulasīdāsa according to his own (poor) lights. The excellences of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) are an abode of delight, a panacea for all doubt and an unfailing remedy for sorrow. Therefore, giving up all other hope and faith, ever sing and hear them, O foolish mind.

दो०—सकल सुमंगल दायक रघुनायक गुन गान ।
सादर सुनहिं ते तरहिं भव सिंधु बिना जलजान ॥ ६० ॥

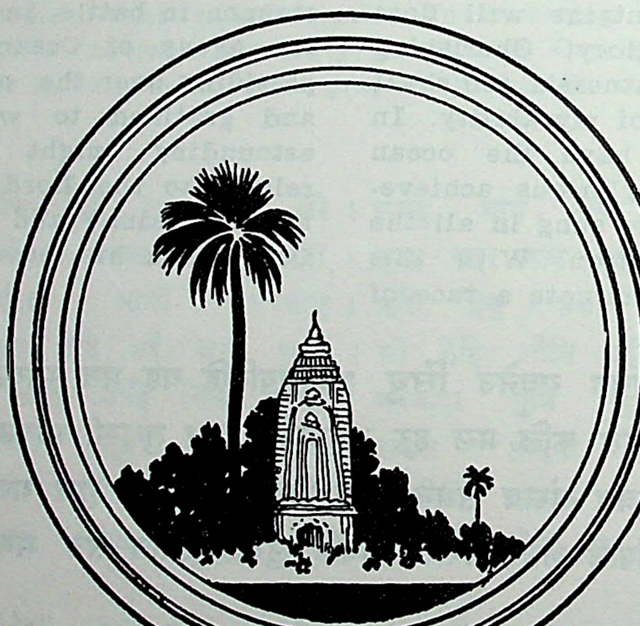
A recital of the virtues of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) bestows all blessings. Those who reverently hear them cross the ocean of mundane existence without any bark. (60)

[PAUSE 24 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

इति श्रीमद्रामचरितमानसे सकलकलिकलुषविध्वंसने

पञ्चमः सोपानः समाप्तः ।

Thus ends the fifth descent into the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, that eradicates all the impurities of the Kali age.



ॐ

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

(The Manasa lake containing the exploits of Sri Rama)

Descent Six

(Lankā-Kāṇḍa)

श्लोक

रामं कामारिसेव्यं भवभयहरणं कालमत्तेभसिंहं
योगीन्द्रं ज्ञानगम्यं गुणनिधिमजितं निर्गुणं निर्विकारम्।
मायातीतं सुरेशं खलवधनिरतं ब्रह्मवृन्दैकदेवं
वन्दे कन्दावदातं सरसिजनयनं देवमुर्वीशरूपम्॥ १॥

I adore Śrī Rāma, the supreme Deity, the object of worship even of Śiva (the Destroyer of Cupid), the Dispeller of the fear of rebirth, the lion to quell the mad elephant in the form of Death, the Master of Yogīs, attainable through immediate knowledge, the storehouse of good qualities, unconquerable, attributeless, immutable, beyond the realm of Māyā, the Lord of celestials, intent on killing the evil-doers, the only protector of the Brahmans, beautiful as a cloud laden with moisture, who has lotus-like eyes and appeared in the form of an earthly king. (1)

शङ्खेन्द्वाभमतीवसुन्दरतनुं शार्दूलचर्माम्बरं
कालव्यालकरालभूषणधरं गङ्गाशशाङ्कप्रियम्।
काशीशं कलिकल्मषौघशमनं कल्याणकल्पद्रुमं
नौमीड्यं गिरिजापतिं गुणनिधिं कन्दर्पहं शङ्करम्॥ २॥

I glorify Śankara, the Lord of Kāśī (the modern Banaras), the Consort of Girijā (Himalaya's Daughter), the storehouse of good qualities, the Destroyer of Cupid, worthy of all praise, shining like a conchshell or the moon, most handsome of person, clad in a tiger's skin, decked with dreadful ornaments in the shape of deadly serpents, fond of the Gangā and the moon, the allayer of the sins of the Kali age and the celestial tree yielding the fruit of Blessedness for the mere asking. (2)

यो ददाति सतां शम्भुः कैवल्यमपि दुर्लभम्।
खलानां दण्डकृद्योऽसौ शङ्करः शं तनोतु मे॥ ३॥

May Lord Śambhu, the bestower of blessings, who confers on the virtuous even final beatitude, which is so difficult to obtain, and who punishes the evil-doers, extend His blessings to me. (3)

दो०—लव निमेष परमानु जुग बरष कलप सर चंड।
भजसि न मन तेहि राम को कालु जासु कोदंड॥

O my soul, why do you not worship Śrī Rāma, who has the indivisible Time for His bow and the various divisions of time such as a Paramāṇu,* a twinkling, a moment, a year, an age and a cycle for His fierce arrows ?

सो०—सिंधु बचन सुनि राम सचिव बोलि प्रभु अस कहेउ।
अब बिलंबु केहि काम करहु सेतु उतरै कटकु॥
सुनहु भानुकुल केतु जामवंत कर जोरि कह।
नाथ नाम तव सेतु नर चढ़ि भव सागर तरहिं॥

On hearing Ocean's words Śrī Rāma called His counsellors and spoke to them thus: "Why delay now ? Build the bridge, so that the army may cross over." "Listen, O Glory of the solar race," said Jāmbavān with joined palms, "Your name itself, my lord, is a bridge by ascending which men cross over the ocean of mundane existence.

चौ०—यह लघु जलधि तरत कति बारा। अस सुनि पुनि कह पवनकुमारा॥
प्रभु प्रताप बड़वानल भारी। सोषेउ प्रथम पयोनिधि बारी॥ १॥
तव रिपु नारि रुदन जल धारा। भरेउ बहोरि भयउ तेहिं खारा॥
सुनि अति उकुति पवनसुत केरी। हरषे कपि रघुपति तन हेरी॥ २॥
जामवंत बोले दोउ भाई। नल नीलहि सब कथा सुनाई॥
राम प्रताप सुमिरि मन माहीं। करहु सेतु प्रयास कछु नाहीं॥ ३॥
बोलि लिए कपि निकर बहोरी। सकल सुनहु बिनती कछु मोरी॥
राम चरन पंकज उर धरहू। कौतुक एक भालु कपि करहू॥ ४॥
धावहु मर्कट बिकट बरूथा। आनहु बिटप गिरिन्ह के जूथा॥
सुनि कपि भालु चले करि हूहा। जय रघुबीर प्रताप समूहा॥ ५॥

"It will take no time to cross this insignificant sea !" Hearing this, the son of the wind-god added: "My lord's glory is a great submarine fire that had long since sucked up the water of the ocean. But it was filled again by the flood of tears shed by Your enemies' wives; that is how it came to be salt in taste." When the monkeys present there heard this hyperbolic remark made by the son of the wind-god, they gazed on the person of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) and smiled. Jāmbavān called the two brothers, Nala and Nīla, and related to them the whole story. "Calling to mind the glory of Śrī Rāma start building the bridge and you will experience no difficulty." He then called the monkey troops and said, "Hear, all of you, a small request of mine. Enshrine in your heart the lotus feet of Śrī Rāma and engage yourself

* The measure of time taken by a sunbeam in passing by an atom of matter.

in a sport, bears and monkeys all. Go forth, yon formidable monkey troops and bring heaps of trees and mountains." On hearing this command the monkeys and bears set forth hurrahing and exclaiming, "Glory to the almighty Hero of Raghu's race!" (1–5)

दो०—अति उतंग गिरि पादप लीलहिं लेहिं उठाइ।
आनि देहिं नल नीलहि रचहिं ते सेतु बनाइ॥ १॥

They would lift up gigantic trees and mountains in mere sport and bring them to Nala and Nīla, who in their turn carefully set to build the bridge. (1)

चौ०—सैल बिसाल आनि कपि देहीं। कंदुक इव नल नील ते लेहीं॥
देखि सेतु अति सुंदर रचना। बिहसि कृपानिधि बोले बचना॥ १॥
परम रम्य उत्तम यह धरनी। महिमा अमित जाइ नहिं बरनी॥
करिहउँ इहाँ संभु थापना। मोरे हृदयँ परम कलपना॥ २॥
सुनि कपीस बहु दूत पठाए। मुनिबर सकल बोलि लै आए॥
लिंग थापि बिधिवत करि पूजा। सिव समान प्रिय मोहि न दूजा॥ ३॥
सिव द्रोही मम भगत कहावा। सो नर सपनेहुँ मोहि न पावा॥
संकर बिमुख भगति चह मोरी। सो नारकी मूढ़ मति थोरी॥ ४॥

The monkeys brought huge mountains, which were received like playballs by Nala and Nīla. When the All-merciful saw the exceedingly beautiful construction of the bridge, He smiled and observed thus: "This is a most delightful and excellent spot; its glory is immeasurable and cannot be described in words. I will install (an emblem of) Lord Śambhu here; it is the crowning ambition of My heart." Hearing this the lord of the monkeys despatched a number of messengers, who invited and fetched all the great sages. Having installed an emblem of Lord Śiva and worshipped It with due solemnity, He said, "No one else is so dear to Me as Śiva. An enemy of Śiva, although he calls himself a devotee of Mine, cannot attain to Me even in a dream. He who is opposed to Śankara and yet aspires for devotion to Me is doomed to perdition, stupid and dull-witted as he is. (1–4)

दो०—संकरप्रिय मम द्रोही सिव द्रोही मम दास।
ते नर करहिं कलप भरि घोर नरक महुँ बास॥ २॥

"Men who, though devoted to Śankara, are hostile to Me and even so those who are enemies of Śiva but votaries of Mine shall have their abode in the most frightful hell till the end of creation. (2)

चौ०—जे रामेस्वर दरसनु करिहहिं। ते तनु तजि मम लोक सिधरिहहिं॥
जो गंगाजलु आनि चढ़ाइहि। सो साजुज्य मुक्ति नर पाइहि॥ १॥
होइ अकाम जो छल तजि सेइहि। भगति मोरि तेहि संकर देइहि॥
मम कृत सेतु जो दरसनु करिही। सो बिनु श्रम भवसागर तरिही॥ २॥

राम बचन सब के जिय भाए । मुनिबर निज निज आश्रम आए ॥
गिरिजा रघुपति कै यह रीती । संतत करहिं प्रनत पर प्रीती ॥ ३ ॥
बाँधा सेतु नील नल नागर । राम कृपाँ जसु भयउ उजागर ॥
बूड़हिं आनहि बोरहिं जेई । भए उपल बोहित सम तेई ॥ ४ ॥
महिमा यह न जलधि कइ बरनी । पाहन गुन न कपिन्ह कइ करनी ॥ ५ ॥

"They who will behold Lord Rāmeśwara will, on quitting the body, go direct to My sphere in heaven. And a man who takes the water of the Gangā and pours it on the Lord will attain liberation in the form of absorption into My being. Again, whosoever adores the Lord in a disinterested spirit and without guile will be blessed by Śankara with devotion to Me. And he who sees the bridge erected by Me will be able to cross the ocean of worldly existence without any exertion." Śrī Rāma's words gladdened the heart of all and the great sages returned each to his own hermitage. Girijā, (says Śankara,) such is the way of the Lord of the Raghus: He ever loves those who take refuge in Him. The clever Nala and Nīla constructed the bridge and by Rāma's grace their renown spread far and wide. Those very rocks that not only sink themselves but cause even other things to sink along with them floated like so many rafts. This is, however, not ascribed to any miraculous power of the ocean, nor to a virtue of the rocks themselves, nor again to any skill of the monkeys.
(1—5)

दो०—श्री रघुबीर प्रताप ते सिंधु तरे पाषान ।
ते मतिमंद जे राम तजि भजहिं जाइ प्रभु आन ॥ ३ ॥

It was by the might of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) that rocks floated on the ocean. They are dull-witted indeed, who go to worship a lord other than Śrī Rāma.
(3)

चौ०—बाँधि सेतु अति सुदृढ़ बनावा । देखि कृपानिधि के मन भावा ॥
चली सेन कछु बरनि न जाई । गर्जहिं मर्कट भट समुदाई ॥ १ ॥
सेतुबंध ढिग चढ़ि रघुराई । चितव कृपाल सिंधु बहुताई ॥
देखन कहुँ प्रभु करुना कंदा । प्रगट भए सब जलचर बृंदा ॥ २ ॥
मकर नक्र नाना झष ब्याला । सत जोजन तन परम बिसाला ॥
अइसेउ एक तिन्हहि जे खाहीं । एकन्ह कें डर तेपि डेराहीं ॥ ३ ॥
प्रभुहि बिलोकहिं टरहिं न टारे । मन हरषित सब भए सुखारे ॥
तिन्ह की ओट न देखिअ बारी । मगन भए हरि रूप निहारी ॥ ४ ॥
चला कटकु प्रभु आयसु पाई । को कहि सक कपि दल बिपुलाई ॥ ५ ॥

Having completed the bridge they made it exceptionally secure; the All-Merciful was glad at heart to see it. As the army marched it was a sight beyond all telling, the troops of monkey warriors roaring as they went. Ascending an eminence near the bridge the gracious Lord of the Raghus surveyed the vast expanse of the ocean. All the creatures inhabiting the ocean appeared on the surface in order to have a look at the Lord, who was the very

fountain-head of mercy. There were many kinds of alligators, crocodiles, fishes and serpents with bodies eight hundred miles in length and colossal in size. There were others who could devour even these. They in their turn were afraid of some other creatures. All gazed upon the Lord and would not stir even when diverted. They were all glad of heart and felt very happy Covered by them the water could not be seen; they were filled with ecstasy at the sight of Śrī Hari's beauty. The army advanced on receiving the Lord's command: who can describe the vastness of the monkey host? (1—5)

दो०—सेतुबंध भइ भीर अति कपि नभ पंथ उड़ाहिं ।
अपर जलचरन्हि ऊपर चढ़ि चढ़ि पारहि जाहिं ॥ ४ ॥

The bridge being overcrowded, some of the monkeys flew through the air; while others crossed over treading on the backs of sea monsters. (4)

चौ०—अस कौतुक बिलोकि द्वौ भाई । बिहँसि चले कृपाल रघुराई ॥
सेन सहित उतरे रघुबीरा । कहि न जाइ कपि जूथप भीरा ॥ १ ॥
सिंधु पार प्रभु डेरा कीन्हा । सकल कपिन्ह कहुँ आयसु दीन्हा ॥
खाहु जाइ फल मूल सुहाए । सुनत भालु कपि जहँ तहँ धाए ॥ २ ॥
सब तरु फरे राम हित लागी । रितु अरु कुरितु काल गति त्यागी ॥
खाहिं मधुर फल बिटप हलावहिं । लंका सन्मुख सिखर चलावहिं ॥ ३ ॥
जहँ कहुँ फिरत निसाचर पावहिं । घेरि सकल बहु नाच नचावहिं ॥
दसनन्हि काटि नासिका काना । कहि प्रभु सुजसु देहिं तब जाना ॥ ४ ॥
जिन्ह कर नासा कान निपाता । तिन्ह रावनहि कही सब बाता ॥
सुनत श्रवन बारिधि बंधाना । दस मुख बोलि उठा अकुलाना ॥ ५ ॥

The gracious Lord of the Raghus and His brother laughed at the sight of this amusing spectacle and marched. The Hero of Raghu's line reached the other shore along with the host; the throng of monkey chiefs was beyond all description. The Lord encamped Himself across the ocean and commanded all the monkeys to go and regale themselves on the delightful fruit and roots. As soon as they heard this the bears and monkeys ran off in all directions. All the trees bore fruit in the interest of Śrī Rāma in season or out of season without any regard to the laws of time. The bears and monkeys would eat the luscious fruit, shake the trees and hurl hill-tops towards Lankā. If they ever found a straggling demon anywhere, they all hemmed him in and teased him not a little; nay, they would bite off his nose and ears and let him go only after reciting to him the Lord's fair renown. Those who had thus lost their nose and ears went and related everything to Rāvaṇa. The moment he heard that the sea had been bridged the ten-headed monster exclaimed in consternation with all his tongues at once (using different phraseology with each):— (1—5)

दो०—बाँध्यो बननिधि नीरनिधि जलधि सिंधु बारीस ।
सत्य तोयनिधि कंपति उदधि पयोधि नदीस ॥ ५ ॥

"What ! has he really bridged the waves, the billows, the sea, the ocean, the main, the deep, the brine, the tide, the hyaline, the lord of rivers ?" (5)

चौ०—निज बिकलता बिचारि बहोरी। बिहँसि गयउ गृह करि भय भोरी॥
मंदोदरीं सुन्यो प्रभु आयो। कौतुकहीं पाथोधि बँधायो॥ १॥
कर गहि पतिहि भवन निज आनी। बोली परम मनोहर बानी॥
चरन नाइ सिरु अंचलु रोपा। सुनहु बचन पिय परिहरि कोपा॥ २॥
नाथ बयरु कीजे ताही सों। बुधि बल सकिअ जीति जाही सों॥
तुम्हहि रघुपतिहि अंतर कैसा। खलु खद्योत दिनकरहि जैसा॥ ३॥
अतिबल मधु कैटभ जेहिं मारे। महाबीर दितिसुत संघारे॥
जेहिं बलि बाँधि सहसभुज मारा। सोइ अवतरेउ हरन महि भारा॥ ४॥
तासु बिरोध न कीजिअ नाथा। काल करम जिव जाकें हाथा॥ ५॥

Then, realizing his own nervousness, he laughed and left for his palace forgetting his fear. When Mandodarī (Ravana's consort) heard that the Lord had arrived and bridged the ocean in mere sport, she took her spouse by the hand, led him to her own palace and spoke to him in most sweet accents. Bowing her head at his feet, she spread the end of her garment as a token of supplication and said, "Listen to my words without getting angry, my beloved: one should enter into hostilities with him alone whom one may be able to conquer by wit or physical force. The disparity between you and the Lord of the Raghus, however, is certainly analogous to that obtaining between a fire-fly and the sun. He who disposed of the most powerful Madhu and Kaiṭabha and finished the most valiant sons of Diti (Hiraṇyakasipu and Hiraṇyakṣa), nay, who bound Bali and despatched King Sahasrabahu (so called because he was possessed of a thousand arms)—it is He who has descended on earth in order to relieve it of its burden. My lord, you should not oppose Him who is the Master of Time, fate and the soul. (1—5)

दो०—रामहि सौंपि जानकी नाइ कमल पद माथ।
सुत कहुँ राज समर्पि बन जाइ भजिअ रघुनाथ॥ ६॥

"Bowing your head at Srī Rāma's lotus feet restore Janaka's Daughter to Him; then, handing over the kingdom to your son and, retiring to the forest, worship the Lord of the Raghus. (6)

चौ०—नाथ दीनदयाल रघुराई। बाघउ सनमुख गएँ न खाई॥
चाहिअ करन सो सब करि बीते। तुम्ह सुर असुर चराचर जीते॥ १॥
संत कहहिं असि नीति दसानन। चौथेंपन जाइहि नृप कानन॥
तासु भजनु कीजिअ तहँ भर्ता। जो कर्ता पालक संहर्ता॥ २॥
सोइ रघुबीर प्रनत अनुरागी। भजहु नाथ ममता सब त्यागी॥
मुनिबर जतनु करहिं जेहि लागी। भूप राजु तजि होहिं बिरागी॥ ३॥
सोइ कोसलाधीस रघुराया। आयउ करन तोहि पर दाया॥
जौं पिय मानहु मोर सिखावन। सुजसु होइ तिहुँ पुर अति पावन॥ ४॥

"Srī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), my lord, is compassionate to the humble. (He will surely forgive you.) Even a tiger (the most ferocious of all beasts) will not devour a man if he goes submissively before him. You have already accomplished all that you had to do: you have conquered not only gods and demons but the whole animate and inanimate creation. Holy men, my lord, have declared this maxim that a monarch should retire to the forest in the fourth stage of his life. There, my spouse, you should adore Him who is the creator, preserver and destroyer (of the universe). Renouncing all worldly ties, my lord, worship the selfsame Hero of Raghu's line, who is fond of the suppliant. The same Lord of the Raghus, the King of Kosala, whom the greatest of sages strive hard to realize and for whom monarchs relinquish their throne and shed every attachment,—it is He who has arrived here to shower His grace on you. If, my beloved, you accept my advice, your fair and exceedingly holy renown shall spread through all the three spheres." (1—4)

दो०—अस कहि नयन नीर भरि गहि पद कंपित गात ।
नाथ भजहु रघुनाथहि अचल होइ अहिवात ॥ ७ ॥

So saying she clasped him by the feet; and with eyes full of tears and trembling in every limb she added, "My lord, worship Srī Rama (the Lord of the Raghus) so that my union with you may last till eternity." (7)

चौ०—तब रावन मयसुता उठाई । कहै लाग खल निज प्रभुताई ॥
सुनु तैं प्रिया बृथा भय माना । जग जोधा को मोहि समाना ॥ १ ॥
बरुन कुबेर पवन जम काला । भुज बल जितेउँ सकल दिगपाला ॥
देव दनुज नर सब बस मोरें । कवन हेतु उपजा भय तोरें ॥ २ ॥
नाना बिधि तेहि कहेसि बुझाई । सभाँ बहोरि बैठ सो जाई ॥
मंदोदरीं हृदयँ अस जाना । काल बस्य उपजा अभिमाना ॥ ३ ॥
सभाँ आइ मंत्रिन्ह तेहिं बूझा । करब कवन बिधि रिपु सैं जूझा ॥
कहहिं सचिव सुनु निसिचर नाहा । बार बार प्रभु पूछहु काहा ॥ ४ ॥
कहहु कवन भय करिअ बिचारा । नर कपि भालु अहार हमारा ॥ ५ ॥

Thereupon Rāvaṇa lifted Maya's daughter (Mandodarī) and the wretch began to harp on his own glory. "Listen, darling: you are haunted by idle fears. What warrior in this world is my equal? I have conquered by the might of my arm not only Varuna (the god presiding over the waters), Kubera (the god of riches), the wind-god, Yama (the god of punishment), and all the other regents of the quarters but Death himself. Gods, demons and human beings are all under my control; what is the cause of your fear, then?" He thus reassured her in many ways and once more went and sat in his council-chamber. Mandodarī was now convinced at heart that it was her husband's impending death which had turned his head. Returning to his council-hall he asked his ministers: "How shall we proceed to fight the enemy?" "Listen, O lord of the demons," replied the ministers, "why do you ask this question again and again? What is there to be afraid of, which should engage our thought? Human beings, monkeys and bears are our food." (1—5)

दो०—सब के बचन श्रवन सुनि कह प्रहस्त कर जोरि ।
नीति बिरोध न करिअ प्रभु मंत्रिन्ह मति अति थोरि ॥ ८ ॥

Hearing the words of all, Prahasta (Rāvaṇa's son) said with joined palms, "Transgress not the bounds of propriety, my lord; your counsellors possess very little wit. (8)

चौ०—कहहिं सचिव सठ ठकुरसोहाती । नाथ न पूर आव एहि भाँती ॥
बारिधि नाघि एक कपि आवा । तासु चरित मन महुँ सबु गावा ॥ १ ॥
छुधा न रही तुम्हहि तब काहू । जारत नगरु कस न धरि खाहू ॥
सुनत नीक आगें दुख पावा । सचिवन अस मत प्रभुहि सुनावा ॥ २ ॥
जेहिं बारीस बँधायउ हेला । उतरेउ सेन समेत सुबेला ॥
सो भनु मनुज खाब हम भाई । बचन कहहिं सब गाल फुलाई ॥ ३ ॥
तात बचन मम सुनु अति आदर । जनि मन गुनहु मोहि करि कादर ॥
प्रिय बानी जे सुनहिं जे कहहीं । ऐसे नर निकाय जग अहहीं ॥ ४ ॥
बचन परम हित सुनत कठोरे । सुनहिं जे कहहिं ते नर प्रभु थोरे ॥
प्रथम बसीठ पठउ सुनु नीती । सीता देइ करहु पुनि प्रीती ॥ ५ ॥

"All your stupid ministers tell you only that which is pleasing to their master; but that way you cannot succeed, my lord. A stray monkey sprang across the ocean and came this side and all the people still extol his doings in their heart of hearts. What! Did none you have any appetite then? Why did you not seize and devour him while he was burning your city? Your ministers have given you, my lord, an advice which, though pleasant to hear, will land you in trouble afterwards. He who has had the sea bridged in mere sport and has crossed over to the Suvela hill with all his army, tell me, is He an ordinary mortal whom you say you will devour? All these people are simply bragging. Dear father, listen to my words with great attention and do not account me a coward. There are multitudes of men in this world who are given to hearing and uttering pleasant words. Those men, however, who hear and utter words which are most salutary yet jarring to the ear are few and far between, my lord. Listen to my sound advice: first send an envoy to Śrī Rāma; and afterwards, when you have restored Janaka's Daughter, make friends with Him. (1–5)

दो०—नारि पाइ फिरि जाहिं जौं तौ न बढ़ाइअ रारि ।
नाहिं त सन्मुख समर महि तात करिअ हठि मारि ॥ ९ ॥

"If He withdraws on receiving back His Consort, you should have no more quarrel with Him. Otherwise meet Him face to face on the battle-field, and give him a tough fight. (9)

चौ०—यह मत जौं मानहु प्रभु मोरा । उभय प्रकार सुजसु जग तोरा ॥
सुत सन कह दसकंठ रिसाई । असि मति सठ केहिं तोहि सिखाई ॥ १ ॥

अबहीं ते उर संसय होई। बेनुमूल सुत भयहु घमोई ॥
सुनि पितु गिरा परुष अति घोरा। चला भवन कहि बचन कठोरा ॥ २ ॥
हित मत तोहि न लागत कैसें। काल बिबस कहुँ भेषज जैसें ॥
संध्या समय जानि दससीसा। भवन चलेउ निरखत भुज बीसा ॥ ३ ॥
लंका सिखर उपर आगारा। अति बिचित्र तहँ होइ अखारा ॥
बैठ जाइ तेहिं मंदिर रावन। लागे किंनर गुन गन गावन ॥ ४ ॥
बाजहिं ताल पखाउज बीना। नृत्य करहिं अपछरा प्रबीना ॥ ५ ॥

"If, my lord, you accept this advice of mine, your fair renown will spread throughout the world in either case." The ten-headed monster asked his son (Prahasta) in a fury, "Fool, who has taught you such wisdom? If you entertain doubt in your mind from even now, my son, you have proved yourself to be a prickly plant at the root of a bamboo (which brings about the destruction of the bamboo)." On hearing the harsh and most malignant remarks of his father Prahasta left for home uttering these bitter words: "Words of good counsel fall flat on you even as a medicine proves ineffectual for a man who is doomed to die." Finding that it was evening now the ten-headed monster turned towards his palace fondly gazing on his twenty arms. On the highest level of Lankā stood a most wonderful hall, where music and dancing contests used to be held. Rāvana went and took his seat in that hall, while Kinnaras (celestial songsters) began to sing his praises. Expert celestial nymphs commenced their dance to the accompaniment of cymbals, tabors and lutes. (1—5)

दो०—सुनासीर सत सरिस सो संतत करइ बिलास।
परम प्रबल रिपु सीस पर तद्यपि सोच न त्रास ॥ १० ॥

He constantly revelled in luxuries which could be enjoyed only by a hundred Indras. He had a most powerful foe threatening at his door; yet he had no anxiety or fear. (10)

चौ०—इहाँ सुबेल सैल रघुबीरा। उतरे सेन सहित अति भीरा ॥
सिखर एक उतंग अति देखी। परम रम्य सम सुभ्र बिसेषी ॥ १ ॥
तहँ तरु किसलय सुमन सुहाए। लछिमन रचि निज हाथ डसाए ॥
ता पर रुचिर मृदुल मृगछाला। तेहिं आसन आसीन कृपाला ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु कृत सीस कपीस उछंगा। बाम दहिन दिसि चाप निषंगा ॥
दुहुँ कर कमल सुधारत बाना। कह लंकेस मंत्र लगि काना ॥ ३ ॥
बड़भागी अंगद हनुमाना। चरन कमल चापत बिधि नाना ॥
प्रभु पाछें लछिमन बीरासन। कटि निषंग कर बान सरासन ॥ ४ ॥

At this end the Hero of Raghu's line encamped with his vast army on Mount Suvela. Observing a very lofty, supremely lovely, even and remarkably shining peak, Lakṣmaṇa carefully spread on it with his own hands beautiful young leaves and blossoms of trees, which he covered with a charming and soft deerskin; it was on this seat that the gracious Lord rested Himself. The

Lord placed His head in the lap of **Sugrīva** (the lord of the monkeys) with the bow and quiver to His left and right. He was passing both His lotus hands on an arrow, while the would-be king of Lankā (Vibhīsana) whispered some secret in His ears. The blessed Angada and Hanuman kneaded His lotus feet in diverse ways; while behind the Lord sat Laksmana in the pose of a warrior, with the quiver fastened at his waist and the bow and arrow ready in his hands.

(1-4)

दो०—एहि बिधि कृपा रूप गुन धाम रामु आसीन ।
धन्य ते नर एहिं ध्यान जे रहत सदा लयलीन ॥ ११ (क) ॥
पूरब दिसा बिलोकि प्रभु देखा उदित मयंक ।
कहत सबहि देखहु ससिहि मृगपति सरिस असंक ॥ ११ (ख) ॥

Thus rested Srī Rama, the embodiment of benignity, beauty and goodness. Blessed are those men who remain ever immersed in the thought of the Lord as depicted here. Looking towards the east the Lord saw the moon risen above the horizon and said to them all, "Just look at the moon and see how undaunted like the king of beasts he appears.

(11 A-B)

चौ०—पूरब दिसि गिरिगुहा निवासी । परम प्रताप तेज बल रासी ॥
मत्त नाग तम कुंभ बिदारी । ससि केसरी गगन बन चारी ॥ १ ॥
बिथुरे नभ मुकुताहल तारा । निसि सुंदरी केर सिंगारा ॥
कह प्रभु ससि महुँ मेचकताई । कहहु काह निज निज मति भाई ॥ २ ॥
कह सुग्रीव सुनहु रघुराई । ससि महुँ प्रगट भूमि कै झाँई ॥
मारेउ राहु ससिहि कह कोई । उर महँ परी स्यामता सोई ॥ ३ ॥
कोउ कह जब बिधि रति मुख कीन्हा । सार भाग ससि कर हरि लीन्हा ॥
छिद्र सो प्रगट इंदु उर माहीं । तेहि मग देखिअ नभ परिछाहीं ॥ ४ ॥
प्रभु कह गरल बंधु ससि केरा । अति प्रिय निज उर दीन्ह बसेरा ॥
बिष संजुत कर निकर पसारी । जारत बिरहवंत नर नारी ॥ ५ ॥

"Dwelling in the eastern quarter, which may be compared to a mountain-cave, this lion of a moon, an embodiment of supreme grandeur, glory and strength, struts through the forest of the sky having rent asunder the crown of a mad elephant in the form of the darkness. The stars appear like so many pearls strewn all over the sky, which serve to adorn the lovely dame of night." "Now tell me, brethren," continued the Lord, "what you think, each of you, of the dark spot in the moon." Said Sugrīva, "Listen, O Lord of the Raghus: it is only the shadow of the earth that is seen in the moon." "The demon Rāhu struck the moon," said another; "and the spot is nothing but a scar left on the latter's bosom." A third suggested: "When Brahma (the Creator) fashioned the face of Rati (consort of the god of love), he took out the essence of the moon (thus leaving a hole in the orb thereof). The hole is still visible in the heart of the moon and through it can be seen the shade of the blue." The Lord said, "Poison is the moon's most beloved brother; that is why he has lodged it in his heart and, diffusing his envenomed rays, torments parted lovers."

(1—5)

दो०—कह हनुमंत सुनहु प्रभु ससि तुम्हार प्रिय दास।
तव मूरति बिधु उर बसति सोइ स्यामता अभास ॥ १२ (क) ॥

Said Hanumān, "Listen, my lord: the moon is Your own beloved servant and it is Your image enshrined in his heart that appears as a dark patch." (12 A)

[PAUSE 7 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

दो०—पवन तनय के बचन सुनि बिहँसे रामु सुजान।
दच्छिन दिसि अवलोकि प्रभु बोले कृपा निधान ॥ १२ (ख) ॥

The all-wise Śrī Rama smiled to hear the words of Hanuman (the son of the wind-god). Then, looking towards the south, the all-merciful Lord spoke thus :— (12 B)

चौ०—देखु बिभीषन दच्छिन आसा। घन घमंड दामिनी बिलासा ॥
मधुर मधुर गरजइ घन घोरा। होइ बृष्टि जनि उपल कठोरा ॥ १ ॥
कहत बिभीषन सुनहु कृपाला। होइ न तड़ित न बारिद माला ॥
लंका सिखर उपर आगारा। तहँ दसकंधर देख अखारा ॥ २ ॥
छत्र मेघडंबर सिर धारी। सोइ जनु जलद घटा अति कारी ॥
मंदोदरी श्रवन ताटंका। सोइ प्रभु जनु दामिनी दमंका ॥ ३ ॥
बाजहिं ताल मृदंग अनूपा। सोइ रव मधुर सुनहु सुरभूपा ॥
प्रभु मुसुकान समुझि अभिमाना। चाप चढ़ाइ बान संधाना ॥ ४ ॥

"Vibhīsana, see how clouds are gathering fast and the lightning flashes in the southern quarter. A lowering cloud is gently rumbling and I fear lest a severe hail-storm may ensue." Vibhīsana replied, "Listen, my gracious lord: there is neither lightning nor a gathered mass of cloud. On the top of Lanka there stands a hall where Ravana is witnessing a music and dancing contest. It is the large royal umbrella spread over his head which presents the appearance of a thick dark mass of cloud; the ornaments in Queen Mandodarī's ears, my lord, flash like lightning; while the incomparable music of cymbals and tabors is the sweet rumbling that You hear, O King of celestials." The Lord smiled to perceive Rāvana's arrogance; He strung His bow and fitted an arrow to the string. (1–4)

दो०—छत्र मुकुट ताटंक तब हते एकहीं बान।
सब कें देखत महि परे मरमु न कोऊ जान ॥ १३ (क) ॥
अस कौतुक करि राम सर प्रबिसेउ आइ निषंग।
रावन सभा ससंक सब देखि महा रसभंग ॥ १३ (ख) ॥

With a single shaft the Lord then struck Ravana's umbrella and crowns as well as Mandodarī's ear-drops, which fell to the ground before the very eyes of all; but none could know the mystery. Having performed this startling feat Śrī Rama's shaft came back and dropped into His quiver again. And everybody in Ravana's assembly was alarmed to see this great interruption in his revelry. (13 A-B)

चौ०—कंप न भूमि न मरुत बिसेषा। अस्त्र सस्त्र कछु नयन न देखा॥
सोचहिं सब निज हृदय मझारी। असगुन भयउ भयंकर भारी॥ १॥
दसमुख देखि सभा भय पाई। बिहसि बचन कह जुगुति बनाई॥
सिरउ गिरे संतत सुभ जाही। मुकुट परे कस असगुन ताही॥ २॥
सयन करहु निज निज गृह जाई। गवने भवन सकल सिर नाई॥
मंदोदरी सोच उर बसेऊ। जब ते श्रवनपूर महि खसेऊ॥ ३॥
सजल नयन कह जुग कर जोरी। सुनहु प्रानपति बिनती मोरी॥
कंत राम बिरोध परिहरहू। जानि मनुज जनि हठ मन धरहू॥ ४॥

There was no earthquake nor any strong gust of wind. Nor did they see any weapon or missile. All however, pondered within themselves that it was a most alarming ill-omen. When the ten-headed monster saw that the assembly had taken fright, he laughed and made the following ingenious remarks: "How can the mere dropping down of crowns be an ill-omen to him in whose case even the falling of heads proved a lasting boon? Therefore, return each to your own home and retire." Accordingly all bowed their head and returned home. But anxiety lodged in Mandodarī's heart ever since her ear-rings dropped to the ground. With eyes full of tears and joining both her palms she said, "O lord of my life, listen to my prayer. My beloved, cease hostility with Śrī Rāma and have no more of obstinacy in your heart taking Him to be a mere mortal. (1—4)

दो०—बिस्वरूप रघुबंस मनि करहु बचन बिस्वासु।
लोक कल्पना बेद कर अंग अंग प्रति जासु॥ १४॥

"Believe my word that Śrī Rāma (the Jewel of Raghu's race) Himself is manifested in the form of this universe and that the Vedas conceive of every limb of His as a distinct sphere. (14)

चौ०—पद पाताल सीस अज धामा। अपर लोक अँग अँग बिश्रामा॥
भृकुटि बिलास भयंकर काला। नयन दिवाकर कच घन माला॥ १॥
जासु घ्रान अस्विनीकुमारा। निसि अरु दिवस निमेष अपारा॥
श्रवन दिसा दस बेद बखानी। मारुत स्वास निगम निज बानी॥ २॥
अधर लोभ जम दसन कराला। माया हास बाहु दिगपाला॥
आनन अनल अंबुपति जीहा। उतपति पालन प्रलय समीहा॥ ३॥
रोम राजि अष्टादस भारा। अस्थि सैल सरिता नस जारा॥
उदर उदधि अधगो जातना। जगमय प्रभु का बहु कलपना॥ ४॥

"The subterranean regions (Pātāla) are His feet and the abode of Brahmā His head; while the other (intermediate) spheres are located in His other limbs. Terrible Death is the mere contraction of His eyebrows, the sun is His eye and the mass of clouds His locks. The twin-born gods Aświnīkumāras (the celestial physicians) are His nostrils and the alternating days and nights constitute the repeated twinkling of His eyelids;

while the ten quarters of the heavens are His ears: so declare the Vedas. The winds are His breath and the Vedas, His own speech; greed is His lower lip and Yama (the god who sits in judgment on the dead), His dreadful teeth; Māyā (cosmic illusion) is His laughter and the regents* of the ten quarters, His arms; fire is His mouth and Varuṇa (the god presiding over the waters), His tongue; while the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe are His gestures. The eighteen principal species of the vegetable kingdom constitute the line of hair on His belly, the mountains are His bones and the rivers represent the network of His veins. The ocean is His belly and the inferno, His organs of urination and excretion. In short, the universe is a manifestation of the Lord and it is no use going into further details. (1—4)

दो०—अहंकार सिव बुद्धि अज मन ससि चित्त महान ।
मनुज बास सचराचर रूप राम भगवान ॥ १५ (क) ॥
अस बिचारि सुनु प्रानपति प्रभु सन बयरु बिहाइ ।
प्रीति करहु रघुबीर पद मम अहिवात न जाइ ॥ १५ (ख) ॥

"Lord Śiva is His ego, Brahmā His reason, the moon His mind and the great Viṣṇu is His faculty of understanding. It is the same Lord Śrī Rāma, manifested in the form of this animate and inanimate creation, who has assumed a human semblance. Pondering thus, hear me, O lord of my life: cease hostility with the Lord and cultivate devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) so that my good-luck† may not desert me." (15 A-B)

चौ०—बिहँसा नारि बचन सुनि काना । अहो मोह महिमा बलवाना ॥
नारि सुभाउ सत्य सब कहहीं । अवगुन आठ सदा उर रहहीं ॥ १ ॥
साहस अनृत चपलता माया । भय अबिबेक असौच अदाया ॥
रिपु कर रूप सकल तैं गावा । अति बिसाल भय मोहि सुनावा ॥ २ ॥

---

*The ten quarters along with their regents are named below:—

Name of the quarter	Regent
East	Indra (the lord of paradise)
South-East	Agni (the god of fire)
South	Yama (the god who recompenses our deeds after death)
South-West	Nirṛti (the lord of the Rākṣasas of a benevolent type)
West	Varuṇa (the god presiding over the waters)
North-West	Vāyu (the wind-god)
North	Kubera (the god of riches)
North-East	Iśāna (Lord Śiva)
The Upper Region	Brahmā (the Creator)
The Iower Region	Ananta (the serpent-god)

† Good-luck in the eyes of a Hindu lady consists in the longevity of her huaband and widowhood is considered as the greatest curse.

सो सब प्रिया सहज बस मोरें। समुझि परा प्रसाद अब तोरें॥
जानिउँ प्रिया तोरि चतुराई। एहि बिधि कहहु मोरि प्रभुताई॥ ३॥
तव बतकही गूढ़ मृगलोचनि। समुझत सुखद सुनत भय मोचनि॥
मंदोदरि मन महुँ अस ठयऊ। पियहि काल बस मतिभ्रम भयऊ॥ ४॥

Ravana laughed when he heard the words of his wife. "Oh, how mighty is the power of infatuation! They rightly observe in regard to the character of a woman that the following eight evils ever abide in her heart: recklessness, mendacity, fickleness, deceit, timidity, indiscretion, impurity and callousness. You have described the enemy's cosmic form and thus told me a most alarming story. But all that (whatever is comprised in that cosmic form), my beloved, is naturally under my control; it is by your grace that this has become clear to me now. I have come to know your ingenuity, my dear; for in this way you have told my greatness. Your words, O fawn-eyed lady, are profound: they afford delight when understood and dispel all fear even when heard." Mandodarī was now convinced at heart that her husband's impending death had deluded him.

(1—4)

दो०—एहि बिधि करत बिनोद बहु प्रात प्रगट दसकंध।
सहज असंक लंकपति सभाँ गयउ मद अंध॥ १६ (क)॥
सो०—फूलइ फरइ न बेत जदपि सुधा बरषहिं जलद।
मूरुख हृदयँ न चेत जौं गुर मिलहिं बिरंचि सम॥ १६ (ख)॥

While Rāvana was laughing and joking in diverse ways as mentioned above, the day broke and the king of Lanka, who was intrepid by nature and further blinded by pride, entered the court. The reed neither blossoms nor bears fruit even though the clouds rain nectar on it. Similarly the light of wisdom would never dawn on a fool even though he may have a teacher like Viranchi (Brahma).

(16 A-B)

चौ०—इहाँ प्रात जागे रघुराई। पूछा मत सब सचिव बोलाई॥
कहहु बेगि का करिअ उपाई। जामवंत कह पद सिरु नाई॥ १॥
सुनु सर्बग्य सकल उर बासी। बुधि बल तेज धर्म गुन रासी॥
मंत्र कहउँ निज मति अनुसारा। दूत पठाइअ बालिकुमारा॥ २॥
नीक मंत्र सब के मन माना। अंगद सन कह कृपानिधाना॥
बालितनय बुधि बल गुन धामा। लंका जाहु तात मम कामा॥ ३॥
बहुत बुझाइ तुम्हहि का कहऊँ। परम चतुर मैं जानत अहऊँ॥
काजु हमार तासु हित होई। रिपु सन करेहु बतकही सोई॥ ४॥

At this end the Lord of the Raghus woke at daybreak and, summoning all His counsellors, asked their opinion: "Tell me quickly what course should be adopted." Jāmbavān bowed his head at the Lord's feet and said, "Listen, O omniscient Lord, indweller of all hearts, storehouse of wisdom, strength, glory, piety and goodness: I offer advice to You according to my own lights. It

is that Vālī's son (Prince Angada) may be sent as an envoy (to Rāvana)." The good counsel commended itself to all and the All-merciful turned to Angada and said, "O son of Valī, repository of wisdom, strength and goodness! go to Lanka, dear son, for My cause. I need not give you any elaborate instructions. I know you are supremely clever. You should talk with the enemy in such words as may advance My cause and serve his interest at the same time."

(1–4)

सो०—प्रभु अग्या धरि सीस चरन बंदि अंगद उठेउ ।
सोइ गुन सागर ईस राम कृपा जा पर करहु ॥ १७ (क) ॥
स्वयंसिद्ध सब काज नाथ मोहि आदरु दियउ ।
अस बिचारि जुबराज तन पुलकित हरषित हियउ ॥ १७ (ख) ॥

Bowing to the Lord's command and adoring His feet, Angada arose and said, "He alone is an ocean of virtues, on whom You shower Your grace, O divine Rama." "All the objects of my lord are self-accomplished," he thought; "He has only honoured me (by charging me with this task)." And the thought thrilled his body and delighted his heart.

(17 A-B)

चौ०—बंदि चरन उर धरि प्रभुताई । अंगद चलेउ सबहि सिरु नाई ॥
प्रभु प्रताप उर सहज असंका । रन बाँकुरा बालिसुत बंका ॥ १ ॥
पुर पैठत रावन कर बेटा । खेलत रहा सो होइ गै भेटा ॥
बातहिं बात करष बढ़ि आई । जुगल अतुल बल पुनि तरुनाई ॥ २ ॥
तेहिं अंगद कहुँ लात उठाई । गहि पद पटकेउ भूमि भवाँई ॥
निसिचर निकर देखि भट भारी । जहँ तहँ चले न सकहिं पुकारी ॥ ३ ॥
एक एक सन मरमु न कहहीं । समुझि तासु बध चुप करि रहहीं ॥
भयउ कोलाहल नगर मझारी । आवा कपि लंका जेहिं जारी ॥ ४ ॥
अब धौं कहा करिहि करतारा । अति सभीत सब करहिं बिचारा ॥
बिनु पूछें मगु देहिं दिखाई । जेहि बिलोक सोइ जाइ सुखाई ॥ ५ ॥

Adoring the Lord's feet and keeping His glory in his heart Angada bowed his head to all and departed. The gallant son of Valī, who was an adept in warfare, was dauntless by nature, cherishing as he did the might of the Lord. As soon as he entered the city he met one of Ravana's sons (Prahasta by name), who was playing there. From words they proceeded to fight; for both were unrivalled in strength and in the prime of youth to boot. He raised his foot to kick Angada, who in his turn seized the foot and, swinging him round, dashed him to the ground. Finding him a formidable warrior, the demons ran helter-skelter in large numbers, too much frightened to raise an alarm. They did not tell one another what had happened, but kept quiet when they thought of the death of Ravana's son. There was a cry in the whole city that the same monkey who had burnt down Lanka had come again. "Who knows what turn Providence is going to take?" everyone thought in excessive dismay. People showed him the way unasked: if he but looked at anyone, the latter would turn deadly pale.

(1–5)

दो०—गयउ सभा दरबार तब सुमिरि राम पद कंज ।
सिंह ठवनि इत उत चितव धीर बीर बल पुंज ॥ १८ ॥

With his thoughts fixed on the lotus feet of Śrī Rāma he then reached the gate of Rāvaṇa's council-chamber. And there the stout-hearted and mighty hero stood with the mien of a lion glancing this side and that. (18)

चौ०—तुरत निसाचर एक पठावा । समाचार रावनहि जनावा ॥
सुनत बिहँसि बोला दससीसा । आनहु बोलि कहाँ कर कीसा ॥ १ ॥
आयसु पाइ दूत बहु धाए । कपिकुंजरहि बोलि लै आए ॥
अंगद दीख दसानन बैसें । सहित प्रान कज्जलगिरि जैसें ॥ २ ॥
भुजा बिटप सिर सृंग समाना । रोमावली लता जनु नाना ॥
मुख नासिका नयन अरु काना । गिरि कंदरा खोह अनुमाना ॥ ३ ॥
गयउ सभाँ मन नेकु न मुरा । बालितनय अतिबल बाँकुरा ॥
उठे सभासद कपि कहुँ देखी । रावन उर भा क्रोध बिसेषी ॥ ४ ॥

He forthwith sent a demon and apprised Rāvaṇa of his arrival. On hearing the news the ten-headed monster laughed and said, "Go, usher him in my presence and let me see where the monkey has come from." Receiving his order a host of messengers ran and fetched the monkey chief. Angada saw the ten-headed giant seated on his throne like a living mountain of collyrium. His arms looked like trees and heads like peaks; while the hair on his body presented the appearance of numerous creepers. His mouths, nostrils, eyes and ears were as big as mountain caves and chasms. With an unflinching mind he entered the court, the valiant son of Vālī, possessed of great might. The assembly abruptly rose at the sight of the monkey; at this Rāvaṇa's heart was filled with great fury. (1–4)

दो०—जथा मत्त गज जूथ महुँ पंचानन चलि जाइ ।
राम प्रताप सुमिरि मन बैठ सभाँ सिरु नाइ ॥ १९ ॥

Thinking of Śrī Rāma's might Angada bowed his head and took his seat in the assembly as fearlessly as a lion treads in the midst of mad elephants. (19)

चौ०—कह दसकंठ कवन तैं बंदर । मैं रघुबीर दूत दसकंधर ॥
मम जनकहि तोहि रही मिताई । तव हित कारन आयउँ भाई ॥ १ ॥
उत्तम कुल पुलस्ति कर नाती । सिव बिरंचि पूजेहु बहु भाँती ॥
बर पायहु कीन्हेहु सब काजा । जीतेहु लोकपाल सब राजा ॥ २ ॥
नृप अभिमान मोह बस किंबा । हरि आनिहु सीता जगदंबा ॥
अब सुभ कहा सुनहु तुम्ह मोरा । सब अपराध छमिहि प्रभु तोरा ॥ ३ ॥
दसन गहहु तृन कंठ कुठारी । परिजन सहित संग निज नारी ॥
सादर जनकसुता करि आगें । एहि बिधि चलहु सकल भय त्यागें ॥ ४ ॥

"Monkey, who are you?" Rāvaṇa asked. "I am an ambassador from the Hero of Raghu's line, Rāvaṇa. There was friendship between you and my father; hence it is in your interest, brother, that I have come. Of noble descent and a grandson of the sage Pulastya (one of the mind-born sons of Brahmā), you worshipped Lord Śiva and Brahmā in various ways, obtained boons from them, accomplished all your objects and conquered the guardians of the different spheres as well as all earthly sovereigns. Under the influence of kingly pride or infatuation you carried off Sītā, the Mother of the Universe. But even now you listen to my friendly advice and the Lord will forgive all your offences. Put a straw between the rows of your teeth and an axe by your throat and take all your people including your wives with you, respectfully placing Janaka's Daughter at the head. In this way repair to Him shedding all fear.

(1—4)

दो०—प्रनतपाल रघुबंसमनि त्राहि त्राहि अब मोहि।
आरत गिरा सुनत प्रभु अभय करैगो तोहि ॥ २० ॥

"And address Him thus: 'O Protector of the suppliant, O Jewel of Raghu's race, save me, save me now.' The moment He hears your piteous cry the Lord will surely rid you of every fear."

(20)

चौ०—रे कपिपोत बोलु संभारी। मूढ़ न जानेहि मोहि सुरारी ॥
कहु निज नाम जनक कर भाई। केहि नातें मानिए मिताई ॥ १ ॥
अंगद नाम बालि कर बेटा। तासों कबहुँ भई ही भेटा ॥
अंगद बचन सुनत सकुचाना। रहा बालि बानर मैं जाना ॥ २ ॥
अंगद तहीं बालि कर बालक। उपजेहु बंस अनल कुल घालक ॥
गर्भ न गयहु ब्यर्थ तुम्ह जायहु। निज मुख तापस दूत कहायहु ॥ ३ ॥
अब कहु कुसल बालि कहँ अहई। बिहँसि बचन तब अंगद कहई ॥
दिन दस गएँ बालि पहिं जाई। बूझेहु कुसल सखा उर लाई ॥ ४ ॥
राम बिरोध कुसल जसि होई। सो सब तोहि सुनाइहि सोई ॥
सुनु सठ भेद होइ मन ताकें। श्रीरघुबीर हृदय नहिं जाकें ॥ ५ ॥

"Mind what you speak, you little monkey. Fool, are you not aware of my being an avowed enemy of the gods? Tell me, young fellow, your own name as well as your father's. What is the common ground on which you claim fellowship between your father and myself?" "Angada is my name: I am Vālī's son. Did you ever meet him?" Rāvaṇa felt uncomfortable when he heard Angada's reply. "Yes, I do remember that there was a monkey, Vālī by name. But, Angada, are you Vālī's son? You have been born as a fire in a cluster of bamboos for the destruction of your own race. Why should you have not perished even in the womb? In vain were you born, who have called yourself with your own mouth a hermit's envoy. Now tell me if all is well with Vālī and, if so, where is he?" Angada laughed at this and then replied: "Ten days hence you shall go to Vālī and embracing your friend personally enquire after his welfare. He will tell you all about the welfare that follows from hostility with Śrī Rāma. Listen, O fool: the seeds of dissension can be sown in the mind of him alone whose heart is closed to the Hero of Raghu's line.

(1—5)

दो०—हम कुल घालक सत्य तुम्ह कुल पालक दससीस।
अंधउ बधिर न अस कहहिं नयन कान तव बीस ॥ २१ ॥

"I, forsooth, am the exterminator of my race; while you, Ravana, are the preserver of yours. Even the blind and the deaf would not say so, whereas you possess a score of eyes and an equal number of ears. (21)

चौ०—सिव बिरंचि सुर मुनि समुदाई। चाहत जासु चरन सेवकाई॥
तासु दूत होइ हम कुल बोरा। अइसिहुँ मति उर बिहर न तोरा॥ १॥
सुनि कठोर बानी कपि केरी। कहत दसानन नयन तरेरी॥
खल तव कठिन बचन सब सहऊँ। नीति धर्म मैं जानत अहऊँ॥ २॥
कह कपि धर्मसीलता तोरी। हमहुँ सुनी कृत पर त्रिय चोरी॥
देखी नयन दूत रखवारी। बूड़ि न मरहु धर्म ब्रतधारी॥ ३॥
कान नाक बिनु भगिनि निहारी। छमा कीन्हि तुम्ह धर्म बिचारी॥
धर्मसीलता तव जग जागी। पावा दरसु हमहुँ बड़भागी॥ ४॥

"What! Did I bring dishonour on my family by acting as His ambassador whose feet even Śiva, Brahma and all the gods and sages desire to serve? It is strange that your heart does not burst asunder even on entertaining such an idea." When he heard the monkey's sharp rejoinder, Ravana glowered at him and said, "Wretch, I put up with your harsh words only because I know the bounds of decorum and righteousness." Said the monkey, "I too have heard of your piety, which is evident from the fact that you stole away another's wife. And I have witnessed with my own eyes the protection you vouchsafed to an envoy. An upholder of piety, why do you not drown yourself and thus end your life? When you saw your sister with her ears and nose cut off, it was from considerations of piety that you forgave the wrong. Your piety is famed throughout the world: I too am very fortunate in having been able to see you."

(1—4)

दो०—जनि जल्पसि जड़ जंतु कपि सठ बिलोकु मम बाहु।
लोकपाल बल बिपुल ससि ग्रसन हेतु सब राहु॥ २२ (क)॥
पुनि नभ सर मम कर निकर कमलन्हि पर करि बास।
सोभत भयउ मराल इव संभु सहित कैलास॥ २२ (ख)॥

"Prate no more, you stupid creature, but look at my arms, O foolish monkey, that are like so many Rahus to eclipse the tremendous moon-like might of the guardians of the spheres. Again, (you might have heard that) while resting on my lotus-like palms in the lake of the heavens, Mount Kailasa with Śambhu (Lord Śiva) shone like a swan. (22 A-B)

चौ०—तुम्हरे कटक माझ सुनु अंगद। मो सन भिरिहि कवन जोधा बद॥
तव प्रभु नारि बिरहँ बलहीना। अनुज तासु दुख दुखी मलीना॥ १॥

तुम्ह सुग्रीव कूलद्रुम दोऊ । अनुज हमार भीरु अति सोऊ ॥
जामवंत मंत्री अति बूढ़ा । सो कि होइ अब समरारूढ़ा ॥ २ ॥
सिल्पि कर्म जानहिं नल नीला । है कपि एक महा बलसीला ॥
आवा प्रथम नगरु जेहिं जारा । सुनत बचन कह बालिकुमारा ॥ ३ ॥
सत्य बचन कहु निसिचर नाहा । साँचेहुँ कीस कीन्ह पुर दाहा ॥
रावन नगर अल्प कपि दहई । सुनि अस बचन सत्य को कहई ॥ ४ ॥
जो अति सुभट सराहेहु रावन । सो सुग्रीव केर लघु धावन ॥
चलइ बहुत सो बीर न होई । पठवा खबरि लेन हम सोई ॥ ५ ॥

"Listen, Angada: tell me which warrior in your army will dare encounter me. Your master (Rama) has grown weak due to separation from his wife, while his younger brother (Laksmana) shares his grief and is consequently very sad. You and Sugrīva are like trees on a river bank (that can be washed away any moment); as for my younger brother (Vibhīsana), he is a great coward. Your counsellor, Jambavan, is too advanced in age to take his stand on the field of battle; while Nala and Nīla are mere architects (and no warriors). There is one monkey, no doubt, of extraordinary might,—he who came before and set fire to the city." On hearing this Valī's son (Angada) replied: "Tell me the truth, O demon king: is it a fact that a monkey burnt down your capital? A puny monkey set on fire Ravaṇa's capital! Who, on hearing such a report, would declare it as true? Ravaṇa, he whom you have extolled as a distinguished warrior is only one of Sugrīva's petty runners. He who walks long distances is no champion; we sent him only to get news.

(1—5)

दो०—सत्य नगरु कपि जारेउ बिनु प्रभु आयसु पाइ ।
फिरि न गयउ सुग्रीव पहिं तेहिं भय रहा लुकाइ ॥ २३ (क) ॥
सत्य कहहि दसकंठ सब मोहि न सुनि कछु कोह ।
कोउ न हमारें कटक अस तो सन लरत जो सोह ॥ २३ (ख) ॥
प्रीति बिरोध समान सन करिअ नीति असि आहि ।
जौं मृगपति बध मेडुकन्हि भल कि कहइ कोउ ताहि ॥ २३ (ग) ॥
जद्यपि लघुता राम कहुँ तोहि बधें बड़ दोष ।
तदपि कठिन दसकंठ सुनु छत्र जाति कर रोष ॥ २३ (घ) ॥
बक्र उक्ति धनु बचन सर हृदय दहेउ रिपु कीस ।
प्रतिउत्तर सड़सिन्ह मनहु काढ़त भट दससीस ॥ २३ (ङ) ॥
हँसि बोलेउ दसमौलि तब कपि कर बड़ गुन एक ।
जो प्रतिपालइ तासु हित करइ उपाय अनेक ॥ २३ (च) ॥

"It seems true that the monkey set fire to your capital without receiving an order from his master. That is why he did not go back to Sugrīva and remained

in hiding for fear. All that you say, Rāvaṇa, is true and I am not in the least angry at hearing it. There is none in our army who would fight you with any amount of grace. Make friends or enter into hostilities only with your equals: this is a sound maxim to follow. If a lion were to kill frogs, will anyone speak well of him? Though it would be derogatory on the part of Śrī Rāma to kill you and He will incur great blame thereby, yet, mark me, Rāvaṇa, the fury of the Kṣatriya race is hard to face." The monkey (Angada) burnt the enemy's heart with shafts of speech shot forth from the bow of sarcasm; and the ten-headed hero proceeded to extract the arrows, so to speak, with pairs of pincers in the form of rejoinders. He laughed and said: "A monkey possesses one great virtue: it does everything in its power to serve him who maintains it. (23 A—F)

चौ०—धन्य कीस जो निज प्रभु काजा । जहँ तहँ नाचइ परिहरि लाजा ॥
नाचि कूदि करि लोग रिझाई । पति हित करइ धर्म निपुनाई ॥ १ ॥
अंगद स्वामिभक्त तव जाती । प्रभु गुन कस न कहसि एहि भाँती ॥
मैं गुन गाहक परम सुजाना । तव कटु रटनि करउँ नहिं काना ॥ २ ॥
कह कपि तव गुन गाहकताई । सत्य पवनसुत मोहि सुनाई ॥
बन बिधंसि सुत बधि पुर जारा । तदपि न तेहिं कछु कृत अपकारा ॥ ३ ॥
सोइ बिचारि तव प्रकृति सुहाई । दसकंधर मैं कीन्हि ढिठाई ॥
देखेउँ आइ जो कछु कपि भाषा । तुम्हरें लाज न रोष न माखा ॥ ४ ॥
जौं असि मति पितु खाए कीसा । कहि अस बचन हँसा दससीसा ॥
पितहि खाइ खातेउँ पुनि तोही । अबहीं समुझि परा कछु मोही ॥ ५ ॥
बालि बिमल जस भाजन जानी । हतउँ न तोहि अधम अभिमानी ॥
कहु रावन रावन जग केते । मैं निज श्रवन सुने सुनु जेते ॥ ६ ॥
बलिहि जितन एक गयउ पताला । राखेउ बाँधि सिसुन्ह हयसाला ॥
खेलहिं बालक मारहिं जाई । दया लागि बलि दीन्ह छोड़ाई ॥ ७ ॥
एक बहोरि सहसभुज देखा । धाइ धरा जिमि जंतु बिसेषा ॥
कौतुक लागि भवन लै आवा । सो पुलस्ति मुनि जाइ छोड़ावा ॥ ८ ॥

"Bravo for a monkey, who dances unabashed in the service of its master anywhere and everywhere. Dancing and skipping about to amuse the people it serves the interest of its master; this shows its keen devotion to duty. Angada, all of your race are devoted to their lord; how could you, then, fail to extol the virtues of your master in the way you have done? I am a respecter of merit and too magnanimous to pay any attention to your scurrilously glib talk." Said Angada: "The son of the wind-god gave me a true account of your partiality to merit. He laid waste your garden, killed your son and set fire to your city and yet (in your eyes) he did you no wrong. Remembering such amiability of your disposition I have been so insolent in my behaviour with you, O Rāvaṇa. On coming here I have witnessed all that Hanumān told me, viz., that you have no shame, no anger and no feeling of resentment." "It is because you possess such a mentality that you have proved to be the death of your own father." Uttering these words Rāvaṇa burst into

a laughter. "Having been the death of my father I would have next claimed you as my victim; but a thought has come to me just now. Knowing you to be a living memorial of Vālī's unsullied fame, I desist from killing you, O vile boaster. Tell me, Rāvaṇa, how many Rāvaṇas there are in the world? Or hear from me how many I have heard of. One went to the nether world (Pātāla) to conquer Bali and was tied up in the stables by the children, who made sport of him and thrashed him till Bali took compassion on him and had him released. Another again was discovered by King Sahasrabāhu, who ran and captured him as a strange creature and brought him home for the sake of fun. The sage Pulastya then went and secured his release. (1—8)

दो०—एक कहत मोहि सकुच अति रहा बालि कीं काँख ।
इन्ह महुँ रावन तैं कवन सत्य बदहि तजि माख ॥ २४ ॥

"Yet another, I am much ashamed to tell you, was held tight under Vālī's arm. Be not angry, Rāvaṇa, but tell me the truth, which of these may you be?" (24)

चौ०—सुनु सठ सोइ रावन बलसीला । हरगिरि जान जासु भुज लीला ॥
जान उमापति जासु सुराई । पूजेउँ जेहि सिर सुमन चढ़ाई ॥ १ ॥
सिर सरोज निज करन्हि उतारी । पूजेउँ अमित बार त्रिपुरारी ॥
भुज बिक्रम जानहिं दिगपाला । सठ अजहूँ जिन्ह कें उर साला ॥ २ ॥
जानहिं दिग्गज उर कठिनाई । जब जब भिरउँ जाइ बरिआई ॥
जिन्ह के दसन कराल न फूटे । उर लागत मूलक इव टूटे ॥ ३ ॥
जासु चलत डोलति इमि धरनी । चढ़त मत्त गज जिमि लघु तरनी ॥
सोइ रावन जग बिदित प्रतापी । सुनेहि न श्रवन अलीक प्रलापी ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, O fool: I am the same mighty Rāvaṇa, the sport of whose arms is familiar to Mount Kailāsa (the peak sacred to Lord Śiva) and whose valour is known to Umā's Spouse (Śiva Himself), in whose worship I offered my heads as flowers. Times without number have I removed my lotus-like heads with my own hands to worship Lord Śiva (the Slayer of Tripura). The prowess of my arms is well-known to the guardians of the eight quarters, whose heart, you fool, still smarts under injuries inflicted by them. The toughness of my chest is familiar to the elephants supporting the eight quarters, whose fierce tusks, whenever I impetuously grappled with them, failed to make any impression on it and snapped off like radishes the moment they struck against it. Even as I walk, the earth shakes like a small boat when a mad elephant steps into it. I am the same Rāvaṇa, known for his might all over the world; did you never hear of him, you lying prattler? (1—4)

दो०—तेहि रावन कहँ लघु कहसि नर कर करसि बखान ।
रे कपि बर्बर खर्ब खल अब जाना तव ग्यान ॥ २५ ॥

"You belittle that Rāvaṇa and extol a mortal man? Barbarous monkey, O puny wretch. I have now fathomed your wisdom." (25)

चौ०—सुनि अंगद सकोप कह बानी । बोलु सँभारि अधम अभिमानी ॥
सहसबाहु भुज गहन अपारा । दहन अनल सम जासु कुठारा ॥ १ ॥
जासु परसु सागर खर धारा । बूड़े नृप अगनित बहु बारा ॥
तासु गर्ब जेहि देखत भागा । सो नर क्यों दससीस अभागा ॥ २ ॥
राम मनुज कस रे सठ बंगा । धन्वी कामु नदी पुनि गंगा ॥
पसु सुरधेनु कल्पतरु रूखा । अन्न दान अरु रस पीयूषा ॥ ३ ॥
बैनतेय खग अहि सहसानन । चिंतामनि पुनि उपल दसानन ॥
सुनु मतिमंद लोक बैकुंठा । लाभ कि रघुपति भगति अकुंठा ॥ ४ ॥

On hearing this, Angada indignantly replied: "Take care what you say, you vainglorious wretch. How can He be accounted a man, you wretched Rāvaṇa, at whose very sight melted away the pride of Paraśurāma,—the same Paraśurāma whose axe was like a fire to consume King Sahasrabāhu's boundless forest of arms, or (to use another simile) like the sea in whose swift tide have drowned innumerable kings time after time. How can Śrī Rāma be a mortal, you arrogant fool? Is the god of love a mere archer, the Gangā a mere stream, the cow of plenty a mere beast, the tree of Paradise a mere tree, the gift of food an ordinary gift, nectar an ordinary drink, Garuḍa (the mount of God Viṣṇu) a mere bird, the thousand-headed Śeṣa a mere serpent and the wish-yielding gem a mere stone, O ten-headed monster? Listen, O dullard: is Vaikuṇṭha an ordinary sphere and unflinching devotion to the Lord of the Raghus an ordinary gain? (1—4)

दो०—सेन सहित तव मान मथि बन उजारि पुर जारि ।
कस रे सठ हनुमान कपि गयउ जो तव सुत मारि ॥ २६ ॥

"What! is Hanumān, O fool, an ordinary monkey, who got off unhurt after trampling your pride as well as that of your army, laying waste your garden, setting your capital on fire and slaying your own son? (26)

चौ०—सुनु रावन परिहरि चतुराई । भजसि न कृपासिंधु रघुराई ॥
जौं खल भएसि राम कर द्रोही । ब्रह्म रुद्र सक राखि न तोही ॥ १ ॥
मूढ़ बृथा जनि मारसि गाला । राम बयर अस होइहि हाला ॥
तव सिर निकर कपिन्ह के आगें । परिहहिं धरनि राम सर लागें ॥ २ ॥
ते तव सिर कंदुक सम नाना । खेलिहहिं भालु कीस चौगाना ॥
जबहिं समर कोपिहि रघुनायक । छुटिहहिं अति कराल बहु सायक ॥ ३ ॥
तब कि चलिहि अस गाल तुम्हारा । अस बिचारि भजु राम उदारा ॥
सुनत बचन रावन परजरा । जरत महानल जनु घृत परा ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, Rāvaṇa: giving up all hypocrisy, why do you not adore the all-merciful Lord of the Raghus? Oh wretch, if you pit yourself against Rāma, even Brahmā (the Creator) and Rudra (Lord Śiva) cannot save you. Fool, brag not in vain; if you contend with Rāma, such will be your fate: struck with Śrī Rāma's arrows your many heads will fall to the ground in front

of the monkeys, and the bears and monkeys will play with those heads as with so many balls. When the Lord of the Raghus gets enraged in battle and His many fierce arrows dart, will you then be able to bounce like this? Realizing this, adore the high-souled Ś· Rāma." On hearing these words Rāvaṇa flared up like a blazing fire on which clarified butter has been thrown. (1—4)

दो०—कुंभकरन अस बंधु मम सुत प्रसिद्ध सक्रारि ।
मोर पराक्रम नहिं सुनेहि जितेउँ चराचर झारि ॥ २७ ॥

"I have a brother like Kumbhakarṇa (*lit.*, one having ears as big as a pair of jars) and the renowned Meghanāda (the vanquisher of Indra) for my son. And have you never heard of my own valour, by which I have conquered the entire creation, both animate and inanimate? (27)

चौ०—सठ साखामृग जोरि सहाई । बाँधा सिंधु इहइ प्रभुताई ॥
नाघहिं खग अनेक बारीसा । सूर न होहिं ते सुनु सब कीसा ॥ १ ॥
मम भुज सागर बल जल पूरा । जहँ बूड़े बहु सुर नर सूरा ॥
बीस पयोधि अगाध अपारा । को अस बीर जो पाइहि पारा ॥ २ ॥
दिगपालन्ह मैं नीर भरावा । भूप सुजस खल मोहि सुनावा ॥
जौं पै समर सुभट तव नाथा । पुनि पुनि कहसि जासु गुन गाथा ॥ ३ ॥
तौ बसीठ पठवत केहि काजा । रिपु सन प्रीति करत नहिं लाजा ॥
हरगिरि मथन निरखु मम बाहू । पुनि सठ कपि निज प्रभुहि सराहू ॥ ४ ॥

"Fool, with the help of monkeys your master has bridged the ocean; is this what you call valour? There are many birds which fly across the ocean; yet listen, O monkey, they are no heroes all. Now each of my arms is a veritable ocean, brimming over with a flood of strength, beneath which many a valiant god and man has been drowned. What hero is there, who will cross these twenty unfathomable and boundless oceans? I made the guardians of the eight quarters do menial service to me; while you, O wretch, glorify an earthly prince before me! If your lord, whose virtues you recount again and again, is valiant in battle, why does he send an ambassador to me? Is he not ashamed to make terms with his enemy? Look at my arms, which lifted and violently shook Mount Kailāsa, and then, foolish monkey, extol your master, if you like. (1—4)

दो०—सूर कवन रावन सरिस स्वकर काटि जेहिं सीस ।
हुने अनल अति हरष बहु बार साखि गौरीस ॥ २८ ॥

"What hero is there equal to Rāvaṇa, who with his own hands cut off his heads time and again and offered them to the sacrificial fire with great delight, as will be borne out by Gaurī's Spouse (Lord Śiva) Himself. (28)

चौ०—जरत बिलोकेउँ जबहिं कपाला । बिधि के लिखे अंक निज भाला ॥
नर कें कर आपन बध बाँची । हसेउँ जानि बिधि गिरा असाँची ॥ १ ॥
सोउ मन समुझि त्रास नहिं मोरें । लिखा बिरंचि जरठ मति भोरें ॥
आन बीर बल सठ मम आगें । पुनि पुनि कहसि लाज पति त्यागें ॥ २ ॥

कह अंगद सलज्ज जग माहीं । रावन तोहि समान कोउ नाहीं ॥
लाजवंत तव सहज सुभाऊ । निज मुख निज गुन कहसि न काऊ ॥ ३ ॥
सिरु अरु सैल कथा चित रही । ताते बार बीस तैं कही ॥
सो भुजबल राखेहु उर घाली । जीतेहु सहसबाहु बलि बाली ॥ ४ ॥
सुनु मतिमंद देहि अब पूरा । काटें सीस कि होइअ सूरा ॥
इंद्रजालि कहुँ कहिअ न बीरा । काटइ निज कर सकल सरीरा ॥ ५ ॥

"When as my skulls began to burn I saw the decree of Providence traced on my brow and read that I was going to die at the hands of a mortal, I laughed; for I knew Brahmā's prophesy to be false. I am not afraid in my heart even when I remember this; for (I am sure) Brahmā must have traced the decree in his senile dementia. Yet, you fool, you repeatedly exalt the might of another hero in my presence, giving up all shame and decorum." Angada replied: "Yes, there is no one in the whole world so shamefaced as you. You are bashful by your innate disposition, since you never indulge in self-praise. Only the story of offering your heads (to Lord Śiva) and lifting the mountain (Kailāsa) has been foremost in your mind and hence you have told it twenty times over. As for (the tale of) that strength of arm by which you were able to conquer Sahasrabāhu, Bali and Vālī, you have kept it secret in your heart. Listen, fool, and brag no more. Can anyone turn a hero by cutting off one's head ? A juggler is never called a hero even though he hacks to pieces his whole body with his own hands. (1—5)

दो०—जरहिं पतंग मोह बस भार बहहिं खर बृंद ।
ते नहिं सूर कहावहिं समुझि देखु मतिमंद ॥ २९ ॥

"Ponder, O fool, and see for yourself that due to infatuation moths burn themselves in fire and donkeys carry loads; but they are never termed as heroes. (29)

चौ०—अब जनि बतबढ़ाव खल करही । सुनु मम बचन मान परिहरही ॥
दसमुख मैं न बसीठीं आयउँ । अस बिचारि रघुबीर पठायउँ ॥ १ ॥
बार बार अस कहइ कृपाला । नहिं गजारि जसु बधें सृकाला ॥
मन महुँ समुझि बचन प्रभु केरे । सहेउँ कठोर बचन सठ तेरे ॥ २ ॥
नाहिं त करि मुख भंजन तोरा । लै जातेउँ सीतहि बरजोरा ॥
जानेउँ तव बल अधम सुरारी । सूनें हरि आनिहि परनारी ॥ ३ ॥
तैं निसिचर पति गर्ब बहूता । मैं रघुपति सेवक कर दूता ॥
जौं न राम अपमानहि डरऊँ । तोहि देखत अस कौतुक करऊँ ॥ ४ ॥

"Cease wrangling any more, O wretch; listen to my advice and have done away with pride. I have not come to you as an envoy (to seek terms with you), O ten-headed monster; the Hero of Raghu's line has sent me from other considerations. The All-merciful has said again and again: 'A lion earns no reputation by killing a jackal.' Bearing in mind the words of my lord I have suffered, O fool, your pungent speech. Otherwise, I would have smashed your

jaws and taken back Sītā by force. I have judged your strength, O vile enemy of heaven, from the very fact that you carried off another's wife while she was all by herself. You are the lord of demons and exceedingly haughty, while I am a messenger of one of Śrī Rāma's servants. If I were not afraid of insulting Śrī Rāma, I would have wrought this wonder before your very eyes:— (1—4)

दो०—तोहि पटकि महि सेन हति चौपट करि तव गाउँ ।
तव जुवतिन्ह समेत सठ जनकसुतहि लै जाउँ ॥ ३० ॥

"Dashing you to the ground, exterminating your army and laying waste your town, O fool, I would have taken away Janaka's Daughter with all your wives. (30)

चौ०—जौं अस करौं तदपि न बड़ाई । मुएहि बधें नहिं कछु मनुसाई ॥
कौल कामबस कृपिन बिमूढ़ा । अति दरिद्र अजसी अति बूढ़ा ॥ १ ॥
सदा रोगबस संतत क्रोधी । बिष्नु बिमुख श्रुति संत बिरोधी ॥
तनु पोषक निंदक अघ खानी । जीवत सव सम चौदह प्रानी ॥ २ ॥
अस बिचारि खल बधउँ न तोही । अब जनि रिस उपजावसि मोही ॥
सुनि सकोप कह निसिचर नाथा । अधर दसन दसि मीजत हाथा ॥ ३ ॥
रे कपि अधम मरन अब चहसी । छोटे बदन बात बड़ि कहसी ॥
कटु जल्पसि जड़ कपि बल जाकें । बल प्रताप बुधि तेज न ताकें ॥ ४ ॥

"Even if I did so, it would hardly bring me any credit; for it is no act of valour to slay the slain. A follower of the Vāmamārga (a sect of Śakti-worshippers indulging in certain prohibited practices as a part of their worship), a man given over to lust, a miser, a grossly stupid fellow, an utterly destitute person, a man suffering from disrepute, an extremely old man, an ever sick person, one who is always angry, he who is hostile to Lord Viṣṇu, an enemy of the Vedas and saints, he who exclusively nourishes his own body, he who is given to slandering others, and he who is a storehouse of sins—these fourteen persons are no better than corpses, even while they live. Realizing this, O wretch, I refrain from killing you. But rouse my anger no more." On hearing this, the demon king bit his lips, wrung his hands and burst out furiously: "O vile monkey, you are now bent upon dying; for though small, you have spoken big words. He, on whose strength you dare utter such wild and sharp words, O stupid monkey, has no strength, glory, intelligence or majesty at all. (1—4)

दो०—अगुन अमान जानि तेहि दीन्ह पिता बनबास ।
सो दुख अरु जुबती बिरह पुनि निसि दिन मम त्रास ॥ ३१ (क) ॥
जिन्ह के बल कर गर्ब तोहि अइसे मनुज अनेक ।
खाहिं निसाचर दिवस निसि मूढ़ समुझु तजि टेक ॥ ३१ (ख) ॥

"Finding him devoid of merit and self-esteem, his father sent him into exile. Apart from that sorrow the separation from his wife is telling on him and

above all he is constantly obsessed with terror of me. The demons devour day and night many such men as he of whose might you are proud; realize this, O fool, and cease to be perverse." (31 A.B)

चौ०—जब तेहिं कीन्हि राम कै निंदा । क्रोधवंत अति भयउ कपिंदा ॥
हरि हर निंदा सुनइ जो काना । होइ पाप गोघात समाना ॥ १ ॥
कटकटान कपिकुंजर भारी । दुहु भुजदंड तमकि महि मारी ॥
डोलत धरनि सभासद खसे । चले भाजि भय मारुत ग्रसे ॥ २ ॥
गिरत सँभारि उठा दसकंधर । भूतल परे मुकुट अति सुंदर ॥
कछु तेहिं लै निज सिरन्हि सँवारे । कछु अंगद प्रभु पास पबारे ॥ ३ ॥
आवत मुकुट देखि कपि भागे । दिनहीं लूक परन बिधि लागे ॥
की रावन करि कोप चलाए । कुलिस चारि आवत अति धाए ॥ ४ ॥
कह प्रभु हँसि जनि हृदयँ डेराहू । लूक न असनि केतु नहिं राहू ॥
ए किरीट दसकंधर केरे । आवत बालितनय के प्रेरे ॥ ५ ॥

When he thus inveighed against Śrī Rāma, the monkey chief grew furious with rage. For he who opens his ears to vituperation against Hari (Bhagavān Viṣṇu) or Hara (Lord Śiva) incurs as great a sin as he who kills a cow. Angada (the great monkey) gave a loud yell and furiously struck both his mighty arms against the ground. The earth shook and members of the assembly were thrown off their seats and took to flight, possessed as they were by the hobgoblin of fear. The ten-headed monster (Ravana) too was about to topple down but recovered himself and stood up. Yet his most beautiful crowns fell to the ground; some of them he took and set on his heads, while Angada sent the rest flying to the Lord. The monkeys fled when they saw the crowns coming. "Good heavens, how is it that meteors have begun to fall even during the daytime ? Or is it that Rāvana in his fury has hurled four thunderbolts, which are coming with great speed ?" The Lord smiled and said, "Be not afraid at heart. They are neither meteors nor thunderbolts, nor even the planets Rāhu and Ketu. They are the crowns of the ten-headed Ravana, despatched by Vālī's son (Angada), that are coming this side." (1—5)

दो०—तरकि पवनसुत कर गहे आनि धरे प्रभु पास ।
कौतुक देखहिं भालु कपि दिनकर सरिस प्रकास ॥ ३२ (क) ॥
उहाँ सकोपि दसानन सब सन कहत रिसाइ ।
धरहु कपिहि धरि मारहु सुनि अंगद मुसुकाइ ॥ ३२ (ख) ॥

The son of the wind-god sprang forward and caught them in his own hands; he then took them to the Lord and placed them before Him. The bears and monkeys gazed on them with wonder; for they were dazzling like the sun. At the other end the ten-headed monster (Rāvaṇa) in his fury indignantly cried to all about him, "Seize the monkey, and seizing him forthwith slay him." Angada smiled to hear this. (32 A.B)

चौ०—एहि बिधि बेगि सुभट सब धावहु । खाहु भालु कपि जहँ जहँ पावहु ॥
मर्कटहीन करहु महि जाई । जिअत धरहु तापस द्वौ भाई ॥ १ ॥
पुनि सकोप बोलेउ जुबराजा । गाल बजावत तोहि न लाजा ॥
मरु गर काटि निलज कुलघाती । बल बिलोकि बिहरति नहिं छाती ॥ २ ॥
रे त्रिय चोर कुमारग गामी । खल मल रासि मंदमति कामी ॥
सन्यपात जल्पसि दुर्बादा । भएसि कालबस खल मनुजादा ॥ ३ ॥
याको फलु पावहिगो आगें । बानर भालु चपेटन्हि लागें ॥
रामु मनुज बोलत असि बानी । गिरहिं न तव रसना अभिमानी ॥ ४ ॥
गिरिहहिं रसना संसय नाहीं । सिरन्हि समेत समर महि माहीं ॥ ५ ॥

"After killing him sally forth at once, all you mighty warriors, and devour every bear and monkey wherever you find one. Go and clear the earth of monkeys and capture the two ascetic brothers (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) alive." The monkey prince (Angada) got enraged and exclaimed again: "Are you not ashamed to wag your tongue like this? Cut your throat and die, you shameless destroyer of your race. Your heart does not crack even on witnessing my strength! O vicious stealer of women, storehouse of impurities, O sense-bound dull-witted wretch, you babble abuse in a state of delirium, which shows that death has overtaken you, O wretched demon. You will reap its consequences later on when the monkeys and bears belabour you. Even as you utter the words that Śrī Rāma is a mortal, it is strange that your tongues, O proud demon, do not drop off. It is, however, certain that your tongues will drop off along with your heads on the battle-field. (1—5)

सो०—सो नर क्यों दसकंध बालि बध्यो जेहिं एक सर ।
बीसहुँ लोचन अंध धिग तव जन्म कुजाति जड़ ॥ ३३ (क) ॥
तव सोनित कीं प्यास तृषित राम सायक निकर ।
तजउँ तोहि तेहि त्रास कटु जल्पक निसिचर अधम ॥ ३३ (ख) ॥

"How can He be a mortal, O ten-headed monster, who killed Vālī with a single shaft? You are blind with all your twenty eyes; fie upon your birth, O dullard of ignoble womb. Śrī Rāma's arrows are all thirsting for your blood and I spare you only for fear of displeasing Him, O vile demon of biting tongue. (33 A-B)

चौ०—मैं तव दसन तोरिबे लायक । आयसु मोहि न दीन्ह रघुनायक ॥
असि रिस होति दसउ मुख तोरौं । लंका गहि समुद्र महँ बोरौं ॥ १ ॥
गूलरि फल समान तव लंका । बसहु मध्य तुम्ह जंतु असंका ॥
मैं बानर फल खात न बारा । आयसु दीन्ह न राम उदारा ॥ २ ॥
जुगुति सुनत रावन मुसुकाई । मूढ़ सिखिहि कहँ बहुत झुठाई ॥
बालि न कबहुँ गाल अस मारा । मिलि तपसिन्ह तैं भएसि लबारा ॥ ३ ॥
साँचेहुँ मैं लबार भुज बीहा । जौं न उपारिउँ तव दस जीहा ॥
समुझि राम प्रताप कपि कोपा । सभा माझ पन करि पद रोपा ॥ ४ ॥

जौं मम चरन सकसि सठ टारी । फिरहिं रामु सीता मैं हारी ॥
सुनहु सुभट सब कह दससीसा । पद गहि धरनि पछारहु कीसा ॥ ५ ॥
इंद्रजीत आदिक बलवाना । हरषि उठे जहँ तहँ भट नाना ॥
झपटहिं करि बल बिपुल उपाई । पद न टरइ बैठहिं सिरु नाई ॥ ६ ॥
पुनि उठि झपटहिं सुर आराती । टरइ न कीस चरन एहि भाँती ॥
पुरुष कुजोगी जिमि उरगारी । मोह बिटप नहिं सकहिं उपारी ॥ ७ ॥

"I am capable of smashing your jaws; but I have no command from the Lord of the Raghus to do so. Otherwise I feel so enraged that I would break all your ten heads and lifting up Laṅkā drop it into the ocean. Your Laṅkā is like a fruit of the Udumbara tree; while you are like so many unsuspecting insects that reside in it. A monkey as I am, I would lose no time in eating it; but the gracious Rāma has not given me the order." Rāvaṇa smiled to hear this witty remark. "Fool, where did you learn to tell such big lies? Vālī never boasted like this; it seems association with the hermits has made you such a vaunting liar." "I am a blustering liar indeed, O monster with twenty arms, if I do not tear out your ten tongues." Recalling Śrī Rāma's might Aṅgada grew indignant and firmly planted his foot in the midst of the whole assembly. "If you can but stir my foot, O fool, Śrī Rāma will return forthwith and I shall forgo Sītā as a lost wager." "Listen, champions all:" exclaimed the ten-headed monster, "seize the monkey by the leg and dash him to the ground." Meghanāda (the vanquisher of Indra) and many other stout warriors rose with delight from their respective seats and rushed with all their might, employing numerous devices; but Aṅgada's foot refused to stir. The competitors, therefore, resumed their seats with their heads bent low. The enemies of heaven rose again and dashed forward; but the monkey's foot moved no more than a sensually-minded striver, O Garuḍa (the enemy of serpents), is able to uproot the tree of error implanted in his heart (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi). (1—7)

दो०—कोटिन्ह मेघनाद सम सुभट उठे हरषाइ ।
झपटहिं टरै न कपि चरन पुनि बैठहिं सिर नाइ ॥ ३४ (क) ॥
भूमि न छाँड़त कपि चरन देखत रिपु मद भाग ।
कोटि बिघ्न ते संत कर मन जिमि नीति न त्याग ॥ ३४ (ख) ॥

Myriads of great warriors of Meghanāda's might arose with joy and swooped down; but the monkey's foot did not budge, and they hung their heads and sat down again. The monkey's foot would no more leave the ground than the soul of a saint would give up moral uprightness even though confronted with numberless obstacles. The enemy's pride left him when he witnessed this. (34 A-B)

चौ०—कपि बल देखि सकल हियँ हारे । उठा आपु कपि कें परचारे ॥
गहत चरन कह बालिकुमारा । मम पद गहें न तोर उबारा ॥ १ ॥
गहसि न राम चरन सठ जाई । सुनत फिरा मन अति सकुचाई ॥
भयउ तेजहत श्री सब गई । मध्य दिवस जिमि ससि सोहई ॥ २ ॥

सिंघासन बैठेउ सिर नाई । मानहुँ संपति सकल गँवाई ॥
जगदातमा प्रानपति रामा । तासु बिमुख किमि लह बिश्रामा ॥ ३ ॥
उमा राम की भृकुटि बिलासा । होइ बिस्व पुनि पावइ नासा ॥
तृन ते कुलिस कुलिस तृन करई । तासु दूत पन कहु किमि टरई ॥ ४ ॥
पुनि कपि कही नीति बिधि नाना । मान न ताहि कालु निअराना ॥
रिपु मद मथि प्रभु सुजसु सुनायो । यह कहि चल्यो बालि नृप जायो ॥ ५ ॥
हतौं न खेत खेलाइ खेलाई । तोहि अबहिं का करौं बड़ाई ॥
प्रथमहिं तासु तनय कपि मारा । सो सुनि रावन भयउ दुखारा ॥ ६ ॥
जातुधान अंगद पन देखी । भय ब्याकुल सब भए बिसेषी ॥ ७ ॥

Everyone who saw the monkey's strength was discomfited at heart. Challenged by the monkey Rāvaṇa himself now rose. Even as Rāvaṇa proceeded to grasp his foot, Vālī's son (Angada) broke out, "You cannot be saved by clinging to my feet. Fool, why do you not go and clasp Śrī Rāma's feet ?" He turned back much abashed at heart to hear this. All his splendour was gone and he was robbed of his glory even as the moon fades away at mid-day. With drooping heads he resumed his seat on the throne as if despoiled of all his riches. Śrī Rāma is the soul of the universe and the lord of life: how can he who is hostile to Him find any rest ? The universe, Umā (Pārvatī), springs into existence and is again dissolved with a mere play of Śrī Rāma's eyebrows. When He is capable of transforming a blade of grass into a thunderbolt and a thunderbolt into a blade of grass, how, then, can a vow of His ambassador prove false ? Angada admonished him in various ways; but as his end had drawn near, he would not listen. Having squashed the enemy's pride, the son of King Vālī glorified his lord to his very face and departed, saying: "If I do not slay you after I have sported with you on the battle-field for some time, it will be no use my indulging in self-praise just now." Angada had killed Rāvaṇa's son even before he arrived in the latter's presence and Rāvaṇa felt very sad at the news. The demons too grew particularly nervous with fear when they witnessed the effectiveness of Angada's challenge. (1—7)

दो०—रिपु बल धरषि हरषि कपि बालितनय बल पुंज ।
पुलक सरीर नयन जल गहे राम पद कंज ॥ ३५ (क) ॥
साँझ जानि दसकंधर भवन गयउ बिलखाइ ।
मंदोदरीं रावनहि बहुरि कहा समुझाइ ॥ ३५ (ख) ॥

Setting at naught Rāvaṇa's power, the mighty monkey, Vālī's son, his body thrilling over with emotion and eyes full of tears, clasped in delight Śrī Rāma's lotus feet. Perceiving that it was evening, the ten-headed monster returned disconsolately to his palace, where Mandodarī again spoke and advised him :— (35 A-B)

चौ०—कंत समुझि मन तजहु कुमतिही । सोह न समर तुम्हहि रघुपतिही ॥
रामानुज लघु रेख खचाई । सोउ नहिं नाघेहु असि मनुसाई ॥ १ ॥

पिय तुम्ह ताहि जितब संग्रामा । जाके दूत केर यह कामा ॥
कौतुक सिंधु नाघि तव लंका । आयउ कपि केहरी असंका ॥ २ ॥
रखवारे हति बिपिन उजारा । देखत तोहि अच्छ तेहिं मारा ॥
जारि सकल पुर कीन्हेसि छारा । कहाँ रहा बल गर्ब तुम्हारा ॥ ३ ॥
अब पति मृषा गाल जनि मारहु । मोर कहा कछु हृदयँ बिचारहु ॥
पति रघुतिहि नृपति जनि मानहु । अग जग नाथ अतुलबल जानहु ॥ ४ ॥
बान प्रताप जान मारीचा । तासु कहा नहिं मानेहि नीचा ॥
जनक सभाँ अगनित भूपाला । रहे तुम्हउ बल अतुल बिसाला ॥ ५ ॥
भंजि धनुष जानकी बिआही । तब संग्राम जितेहु किन ताही ॥
सुरपति सुत जानइ बल थोरा । राखा जिअत आँखि गहि फोरा ॥ ६ ॥
सूपनखा कै गति तुम्ह देखी । तदपि हृदयँ नहिं लाज बिसेषी ॥ ७ ॥

"Ponder in your mind, my beloved lord, and abandon perversity; your conflict with the Lord of the Raghus is quite out of place. Śrī Rāma's younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) had traced a thin line;* that too you could not cross. Such is your valour! My beloved, do you expect to conquer Him in battle, whose messenger performed such feats? Leaping across the ocean in mere sport, that lion among monkeys fearlessly entered your Lankā, killed your guards and laid waste your garden. Nay, he killed Prince Akṣa under your very nose, and, setting fire to the whole capital, reduced it to ashes. Where did your pride of power remain lurking at that time? Indulge no more in idle boasts, my spouse, and lay my words a little to heart. Do not imagine that the Lord of the Raghus is a mere earthly king, my husband; but know him to be the Ruler of the animate and inanimate creation, unequalled in strength. The might of His arrows is known to Mārīcha; but you did not heed his words, taking him to be a mean fellow. In Janaka's court were assembled numberless kings; you too were present there with your incomparable and enormous strength. There Śrī Rāma broke Śiva's bow and won the hand of Janaka's Daughter; why did you not conquer Him in battle then? The son of Indra (the lord of celestials) tasted of His strength when He caught hold of him and spared his life after destroying one of his eyes. You also witnessed Śūrpaṇakhā's condition, yet you did not feel much abashed in your heart. (1—7)

दो०—बधि बिराध खर दूषनहि लीलाँ हत्यो कबंध ।
बालि एक सर मार्‍यो तेहि जानहु दसकंध ॥ ३६ ॥

"My ten-headed lord, try to recognize Him, who, having slain Virādha as well as Khara and Dūṣaṇa, killed Kabandha in mere sport and disposed of Vālī with a single arrow. (36)

* It is mentioned in other works that, while leaving Sītā all alone to join Śrī Rāma, who had been out chasing the gold deer, Lakṣmaṇa traced with an end of his bow a line round Her cottage at Pañchavaṭī with a curse that any demon whatsoever who dared to cross the line would be instantly reduced to ashes. Availing himself of the opportunity Rāvaṇa made his appearance there in the guise of a mendicant and begged alms of Sītā; and the latter offered to give him alms while keeping within the line. Rāvaṇa, however, refused to accept the alms from within a barrier and carried off Sītā as soon as She overstepped the boundary.

चौ०—जेहिं जलनाथ बँधायउ हेला । उतरे प्रभु दल सहित सुबेला ॥
कारुनीक दिनकर कुल केतू । दूत पठायउ तव हित हेतू ॥ १ ॥
सभा माझ जेहिं तव बल मथा । करि बरूथ महुँ मृगपति जथा ॥
अंगद हनुमत अनुचर जाके । रन बाँकुरे बीर अति बाँके ॥ २ ॥
तेहि कहँ पिय पुनि पुनि नर कहहू । मुधा मान ममता मद बहहू ॥
अहह कंत कृत राम बिरोधा । काल बिबस मन उपज न बोधा ॥ ३ ॥
काल दंड गहि काहु न मारा । हरइ धर्म बल बुद्धि बिचारा ॥
निकट काल जेहि आवत साईं । तेहि भ्रम होइ तुम्हारिहि नाईं ॥ ४ ॥

"He who had the ocean bridged as a mere pastime and has encamped with His host on Mount Suvela, the same merciful Lord, the glory of the solar race, sent to you in your own interest an ambassador who, like a lion in the midst of a herd of elephants trampled on your might in open court. Nay, He has for His servants most formidable warriors like Aṅgada and Hanumān, who are so dauntless in battle; and still, my beloved lord, you speak of Him again and again as a mortal! In vain do you carry on your head the burden of pride, attachment and arrogance. Ah, my lord, you have turned hostile to Śrī Rāma and, overtaken as you are by death, the light of wisdom does not dawn on your mind. Death does not smite anyone with uplifted rod; he simply robs the victim of his piety, strength, reason and judgment. He alone whom death has approached very near falls a prey to delusion like you. (1–4)

दो०—दुइ सुत मरे दहेउ पुर अजहुँ पूर पिय देहु ।
कृपासिंधु रघुनाथ भजि नाथ बिमल जसु लेहु ॥ ३७ ॥

"Two of your sons have been slain and your capital has been burnt down; retrace your step even now, my beloved. Adore the all-merciful Lord of the Raghus, my husband, and win unsullied fame thereby." (37)

चौ०—नारि बचन सुनि बिसिख समाना । सभाँ गयउ उठि होत बिहाना ॥
बैठ जाइ सिंघासन फूली । अति अभिमान त्रास सब भूली ॥ १ ॥
इहाँ राम अंगदहि बोलावा । आइ चरन पंकज सिरु नावा ॥
अति आदर समीप बैठारी । बोले बिहँसि कृपाल खरारी ॥ २ ॥
बालितनय कौतुक अति मोही । तात सत्य कहु पूछउँ तोही ॥
रावनु जातुधान कुल टीका । भुज बल अतुल जासु जग लीका ॥ ३ ॥
तासु मुकुट तुम्ह चारि चलाए । कहहु तात कवनी बिधि पाए ॥
सुनु सर्बग्य प्रनत सुखकारी । मुकुट न होहिं भूप गुन चारी ॥ ४ ॥
साम दान अरु दंड बिभेदा । नृप उर बसहिं नाथ कह बेदा ॥
नीति धर्म के चरन सुहाए । अस जियँ जानि नाथ पहिं आए ॥ ५ ॥

Hearing the words of his consort (Mandodarī), which were piercing like a shaft, he rose and left for his council-chamber as soon as the day broke. Forgetting all his fears he went and occupied his throne bloated with

excess of pride. At this end Śrī Rāma summoned Angada, who came and bowed his head at the Lord's lotus feet. The gracious Rāma (the slayer of Khara) most politely seated him by His side and smilingly said, "O son of Vālī, I have great curiosity in my mind; therefore, I ask you a question. Tell me the truth, dear child. Rāvaṇa is the head of the demon race; he is celebrated throughout the world for his incomparable might. It is rather strange that you tossed no less than four of his crowns to me; tell me, my son, by what device you were able to lay your hands on them ?" "Listen, O omniscient lord, the delighter of the suppliant: they were no crowns but the four virtues (resources) of a king, viz., Sāma (conciliation), Dāna (gift), Daṇḍa (physical force or coercion) and Bheda (division), which abide in the heart of a king—so declare the Vedas, my lord. They are the beautiful pedestals of statesmanship: remembering this, they themselves came to my lord (who is a true repository of all statesmanlike virtues). (1—5)

दो०—धर्महीन प्रभु पद बिमुख काल बिबस दससीस ।
तेहि परिहरि गुन आए सुनहु कोसलाधीस ॥ ३८ (क) ॥
परम चतुरता श्रवन सुनि बिहँसे रामु उदार ।
समाचार पुनि सब कहे गढ़ के बालिकुमार ॥ ३८ (ख) ॥

"Listen, O Lord of Kosala: Rāvaṇa (the ten-headed monster) is lacking in piety, bears a settled aversion to my lord's feet and has fallen into the clutches of death. Hence the aforementioned virtues have forsaken him and sought refuge in You." The noble-minded Rāma smiled to hear his most ingenious reply. The son of Vālī then gave Him a report about the fort of Lankā. (38 A-B)

चौ०—रिपु के समाचार जब पाए । राम सचिव सब निकट बोलाए ॥
लंका बाँके चारि दुआरा । केहि बिधि लागिअ करहु बिचारा ॥ १ ॥
तब कपीस रिच्छेस बिभीषन । सुमिरि हृदयँ दिनकर कुल भूषन ॥
करि बिचार तिन्ह मंत्र दृढ़ावा । चारि अनी कपि कटकु बनावा ॥ २ ॥
जथाजोग सेनापति कीन्हे । जूथप सकल बोलि तब लीन्हे ॥
प्रभु प्रताप कहि सब समुझाए । सुनि कपि सिंघनाद करि धाए ॥ ३ ॥
हरषित राम चरन सिर नावहिं । गहि गिरि सिखर बीर सब धावहिं ॥
गर्जहिं तर्जहिं भालु कपीसा । जय रघुबीर कोसलाधीसा ॥ ४ ॥
जानत परम दुर्ग अति लंका । प्रभु प्रताप कपि चले असंका ॥
घटाटोप करि चहुँ दिसि घेरी । मुखहिं निसान बजावहिं भेरी ॥ ५ ॥

When Śrī Rāma received the news about the enemy, He summoned all His counsellors by His side. "Lankā has four massive gates; take counsel as to how we should assail them." Thereupon the monkey lord (Sugrīva), Jāmbavān (the king of bears) and Vibhīṣaṇa (Rāvaṇa's brother) invoked in their heart the Ornament of the solar race; and putting their heads together they resolved upon a definite plan. They divided the monkey host into four brigades and appointed efficient generals to each. They then summoned all the company commanders and bringing the Lord's might home to

them issued instructions hearing which the monkeys rushed forward roaring like lions. They gladly bowed their head at Śrī Rāma's feet, and with mountain-peaks in their hands all the heroes sallied forth. Shouting "Glory to the Hero of Raghu's line, the Lord of Kosala!" the bears and monkey chiefs roared and assumed a threatening attitude. Even though they knew that Laṅkā was a most impregnable fortress, the monkeys marched forward undaunted depending on the might of their lord. Encompassing all the four quarters like a mass of clouds spreading over the horizon on all sides, they imitated the sound of drums and kettle-drums with their mouth. (1—5)

दो०—जयति राम जय लछिमन जय कपीस सुग्रीव ।
गर्जहिं सिंघनाद कपि भालु महा बल सींव ॥ ३९ ॥

"Glory to Rāma, glory to Lakṣmaṇa and glory to Sugrīva, the lord of the monkeys!" thus roared the monkeys and bears, unsurpassed in their great might, like so many lions. (39)

चौ०—लंकाँ भयउ कोलाहल भारी । सुना दसानंन अति अहँकारी ॥
देखहु बनरन्ह केरि ढिठाई । बिहँसि निसाचर सेन बोलाई ॥ १ ॥
आए कीस काल के प्रेरे । छुधावंत सब निसिचर मेरे ॥
अस कहि अट्टहास सठ कीन्हा । गृह बैठें अहार बिधि दीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
सुभट सकल चारिहुँ दिसि जाहू । धरि धरि भालु कीस सब खाहू ॥
उमा रावनहि अस अभिमाना । जिमि टिट्टिभ खग सूत उताना ॥ ३ ॥
चले निसाचर आयसु मागी । गहि कर भिंडिपाल बर साँगी ॥
तोमर मुद्गर परसु प्रचंडा । सूल कृपान परिघ गिरिखंडा ॥ ४ ॥
जिमि अरुनोपल निकर निहारी । धावहिं सठ खग मांस अहारी ॥
चोंच भंग दुख तिन्हहि न सूझा । तिमि धाए मनुजाद अबूझा ॥ ५ ॥

Laṅkā became a scene of great uproar. When the highly conceited Rāvaṇa heard it, he with a smile said, "Look at the insolence of these monkeys!" and summoned the demon host. "The monkeys have crossed over here driven by fate, and my demons are all hungry. God has provided them with a meal even at their home." So saying the idiot burst into a horse-laugh. "Sally forth in every direction, champions all; and wherever you find the bears and monkeys seize and devour them all." Umā, Rāvaṇa's conceit was as great as that of the sandpiper, which goes to sleep with its legs in the air (and thinks that it will support the heavens in case they fall). Taking his orders, the demons sallied forth, armed with excellent slings, javelins, iron clubs and maces, fierce axes, pikes, swords, bludgeons and masses of rock in their hands. As foolish carnivorous birds swoop down upon a heap of rubies the moment they see it, and have no idea of the pain they would have on breaking their beaks against it, so did the man-eating monsters rush forth in their folly. (1—5)

दो०—नानायुध सर चाप धर जातुधान बल बीर ।
कोट कँगूरन्हि चढ़ि गए कोटि कोटि रनधीर ॥ ४० ॥

Armed with bows and arrows as well as with other weapons of various kinds, a vast cloud of mighty and valiant demons, staunch in battle, climbed up the battlements of the fort. (40)

चौ०—कोट कँगूरन्हि सोहहिं कैसे । मेरु के सृंगनि जनु घन बैसे ॥
बाजहिं ढोल निसान जुझाऊ । सुनि धुनि होइ भटन्हि मन चाऊ ॥ १ ॥
बाजहिं भेरि नफीरि अपारा । सुनि कादर उर जाहिं दरारा ॥
देखिन्ह जाइ कपिन्ह के ठट्टा । अति बिसाल तनु भालु सुभट्टा ॥ २ ॥
धावहिं गनहिं न अवघट घाटा । पर्बत फोरि करहिं गहि बाटा ॥
कटकटाहिं कोटिन्ह भट गर्जहिं । दसन ओठ काटहिं अति तर्जहिं ॥ ३ ॥
उत रावन इत राम दोहाई । जयति जयति जय परी लराई ॥
निसिचर सिखर समूह ढहावहिं । कूदि धरहिं कपि फेरि चलावहिं ॥ ४ ॥

On the gold battlements they looked like dark clouds hanging on the heights of Mount Meru. Martial drums and tabors sounded; the soul of the warriors was stirred by their crash. Numberless kettle-drums and clarionets were also playing; their music cracked the heart of cowards. Advancing further, the demons saw the hosts of monkey and bear champions, exceptionally huge in size, who in their onrush would make no account of rugged valleys and catching hold of mountains would cleave them asunder and make passage through them. Gnashing their teeth and biting their lips, myriads of warriors on both sides roared and bullied, calling here on Rāma and there on Rāvaṇa. With shouts of victory on both sides the fight actually commenced. The demons cast down volleys of mountain-peaks, which the monkeys would seize with a bound and hurl them back. (1–4)

छं०—धरि कुधर खंड प्रचंड मर्कट भालु गढ़ पर डारहीं ।
झपटहिं चरन गहि पटकि महि भजि चलत बहुरि पचारहीं ॥
अति तरल तरुन प्रताप तरपहिं तमकि गढ़ चढ़ि चढ़ि गए ।
कपि भालु चढ़ि मंदिरन्ह जहँ तहँ राम जसु गावत भए ॥

The fierce monkeys and bears would lay hold of masses of rock and hurl them against the fort. Darting against their adversary they would seize him by the leg and dash him to the ground; and in the event of his taking to flight they would challenge him to a duel again. The most agile and redoubtable monkeys and bears lightly sprang and climbed up the fort and penetrating the palaces sang Śrī Rāma's praises wherever they pleased.

दो०—एकु एकु निसिचर गहि पुनि कपि चले पराइ ।
ऊपर आपु हेठ भट गिरहिं धरनि पर आइ ॥ ४१ ॥

Catching hold of a demon each the monkeys rushed back and jumped down to the ground with the demons beneath and themselves on the top. (41)

चौ०--राम प्रताप प्रबल कपिजूथा । मर्दहिं निसिचर सुभट बरूथा ॥
चढ़े दुर्ग पुनि जहँ तहँ बानर । जय रघुबीर प्रताप दिवाकर ॥ १ ॥
चले निसाचर निकर पराई । प्रबल पवन जिमि घन समुदाई ॥
हाहाकार भयउ पुर भारी । रोवहिं बालक आतुर नारी ॥ २ ॥
सब मिलि देहिं रावनहि गारी । राज करत एहिं मृत्यु हँकारी ॥
निज दल बिचल सुनी तेहिं काना । फेरि सुभट लंकेस रिसाना ॥ ३ ॥
जो रन बिमुख सुना मैं काना । सो मैं हतब कराल कृपाना ॥
सर्बसु खाइ भोग करि नाना । समर भूमि भए बल्लभ प्राना ॥ ४ ॥
उग्र बचन सुनि सकल डेराने । चले क्रोध करि सुभट लजाने ॥
सन्मुख मरन बीर कै सोभा । तब तिन्ह तजा प्रान कर लोभा ॥ ५ ॥

Strengthened by Śrī Rāma's might, the monkey host crushed the ranks of the demon warriors. They then climbed up the fort here and there and shouted glory to the Hero of Raghu's line, who was majestic as the sun. The demon host fled before them like a mass of clouds driven by a strong blast. The city now burst into wails and howls; children, invalids and women in particular wept aloud All joined in calling Rāvana names; he, they said had invited death while enjoying sovereignty. When he heard that his troops had beaten a retreat, the king of Lankā rallied his champions and then exclaimed in fury: "If I hear of anyone turning his back on the battle-field, I will behead him with my own terrible sword. You consumed my all and enjoyed all sorts of luxuries till now and lo! life has become so dear to you on the field of battle." The champions were all alarmed and put to shame to hear this stern rebuke, and marched against the enemy in great fury. To die in open combat is the glory of a warrior they thought; and they loved their life no more. (1—5)

दो०—बहु आयुध धर सुभट सब भिरहिं पचारि पचारि ।
ब्याकुल किए भालु कपि परिघ त्रिसूलन्हि मारि ॥ ४२ ॥

Armed with weapons of various kinds, all the champions grappled with their antagonists, challenging them again and again. Striking the bears and monkeys with iron bludgeons and tridents, they deprived them of their nerve. (42)

चौ०—भय आतुर कपि भागन लागे । जद्यपि उमा जीतिहहिं आगे ॥
कोउ कह कहँ अंगद हनुमंता । कहँ नल नील दुबिद बलवंता ॥ १ ॥
निज दल बिकल सुना हनुमाना । पच्छिम द्वार रहा बलवाना ॥
मेघनाद तहँ करइ लराई । टूट न द्वार परम कठिनाई ॥ २ ॥
पवनतनय मन भा अति क्रोधा । गर्जेउ प्रबल काल सम जोधा ॥
कूदि लंक गढ़ ऊपर आवा । गहि गिरि मेघनाद कहुँ धावा ॥ ३ ॥
भंजेउ रथ सारथी निपाता । ताहि हृदय महुँ मारेसि लाता ॥
दुसरें सूत बिकल तेहि जाना । स्यंदन घालि तुरत गृह आना ॥ ४ ॥

Struck with terror (continues Lord Siva) the monkeys turned tail, although, Umā, they would come out victorious in the end. One exclaimed, "Where are

Angada and Hanumān? Where are the mighty Nala, Nīla and Dwivida?" At the time Hanumān heard that his troops were breaking, that mighty warrior held his position at the western gate of Lankā, where Meghanāda led the defence. The gate, however, would not give way and Hanumān was faced with a mighty impediment. The son of the wind-god grew terribly furious at heart and the warrior, who was formidable as death, gave a loud roar. He sprang and reached the fort of Lankā; and seizing a rock he rushed at Meghanāda, shattered his chariot, overthrew the charioteer and kicked Meghanāda himself at his chest. Another charioteer, who perceived the distress of the prince, picked him up in his own chariot and speedily brought him home. (1—4)

दो०—अंगद सुना पवनसुत गढ़ पर गयउ अकेल ।
रन बाँकुरा बालिसुत तरकि चढ़ेउ कपि खेल ॥ ४३ ॥

When Angada heard that the son of the wind-god had gone to the fort single-handed, the son of Vālī, who was so valiant in battle, reached the fort in a single bound as a monkey would do out of sheer fun. (43)

चौ०—जुद्ध बिरुद्ध क्रुद्ध द्वौ बंदर । राम प्रताप सुमिरि उर अंतर ॥
रावन भवन चढ़े द्वौ धाई । करहिं कोसलाधीस दोहाई ॥ १ ॥
कलस सहित गहि भवनु ढहावा । देखि निसाचरपति भय पावा ॥
नारि बृंद कर पीटहिं छाती । अब दुइ कपि आए उतपाती ॥ २ ॥
कपिलीला करि तिन्हहि डेरावहिं । रामचंद्र कर सुजसु सुनावहिं ॥
पुनि कर गहि कंचन के खंभा । कहेन्हि करिअ उतपात अरंभा ॥ ३ ॥
गर्जि परे रिपु कटक मझारी । लागे मर्दै भुज बल भारी ॥
काहुहि लात चपेटन्हि केहू । भजहु न रामहि सो फल लेहू ॥ ४ ॥

The two monkeys let loose their fury against the enemy on the battle-field. Invoking in their heart the might of Śrī Rāma, both ran up to Rāvaṇa's own palace and proclaimed the victory of Kosala's lord. Holding the edifice in their hands they overthrew it with every pinnacle. The demon king was dismayed when he saw this. The women beat their breast with their hands crying: "This time the two pestilent monkeys have come!" Angada and Hanumān frightened them with their monkey-like pranks and proclaimed to them the glories of Śrī Rāmachandra. Then, grasping each a gold pillar in their hands, the two champions exclaimed, "Let us now begin upon our ravaging job!" Presently they roared and fell on the enemy's ranks and began to crush them with their mighty strength of arm, striking some with their foot and slapping another on the face and crying: "Take the consequences of not adoring Śrī Rāma!" (1—4)

दो०—एक एक सों मर्दहिं तोरि चलावहिं मुंड ।
रावन आगें परहिं ते जनु फूटहिं दधि कुंड ॥ ४४ ॥

The two heroes crushed their adversaries one against another and, pulling off the victims' heads, hurled them with such precision that they dropped in front of Rāvaṇa and burst like so many earthen vases full of curds. (44)

चौ०—महा महा मुखिआ जे पावहिं । ते पद गहि प्रभु पास चलावहिं ॥
कहइ बिभीषनु तिन्ह के नामा । देहिं राम तिन्हहू निज धामा ॥ १ ॥
खल मनुजाद द्विजामिष भोगी । पावहिं गति जो जाचत जोगी ॥
उमा राम मृदुचित करुनाकर । बयर भाव सुमिरत मोहि निसिचर ॥ २ ॥
देहिं परम गति सो जियँ जानी । अस कृपाल को कहहु भवानी ॥
अस प्रभु सुनि न भजहिं भ्रम त्यागी । नर मतिमंद ते परम अभागी ॥ ३ ॥
अंगद अरु हनुमंत प्रवेसा । कीन्ह दुर्ग अस कह अवधेसा ॥
लंकाँ द्वौ कपि सोहहिं कैसें । मथहिं सिंधु दुइ मंदर जैसें ॥ ४ ॥

Whenever the two monkey chiefs caught hold of any great general of the demon host, they would seize him by the leg and send him flying to their lord (Śrī Rāma). Vibhīṣaṇa would mention their name and Śrī Rāma assigned even them a quarter in His own abode. Man-eating monsters who feasted on the flesh of holy Brahmans thus attained a destiny which is solicited even by Yogīs (ascetics given to contemplation on God). Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) Śrī Rāma is so tender-hearted and such a storehouse of compassion that He bestows the highest state (final beatitude) even on the demons, remembering that they think of Him even though in a spirit of hostility ! Tell me, Bhavānī, who else is so benignant ? Most dull-witted and utterly wretched are the men who, even on hearing of such a lord, worship Him not, disabusing themselves of all delusion. "Angada and Hanumān have evidently forced their way into the fort of Lankā," thus observed Ayodhyā's lord. Rampaging in Lankā, the two monkeys looked like a pair of Mandaras churning the ocean. (1—4)

दो०—भुज बल रिपु दल दलमलि देखि दिवस कर अंत ।
कूदे जुगल बिगत श्रम आए जहँ भगवंत ॥ ४५ ॥

Having crushed and battered the enemy's ranks by the might of their arm and perceiving that it was now the close of day, the two champions jumped down without any exertion and came where the Lord was. (45)

चौ०—प्रभु पद कमल सीस तिन्ह नाए । देखि सुभट रघुपति मन भाए ॥
राम कृपा करि जुगल निहारे । भए बिगतश्रम परम सुखारे ॥ १ ॥
गए जानि अंगद हनुमाना । फिरे भालु मर्कट भट नाना ॥
जातुधान प्रदोष बल पाई । धाए करि दससीस दोहाई ॥ २ ॥
निसिचर अनी देखि कपि फिरे । जहँ तहँ कटकटाइ भट भिरे ॥
द्वौ दल प्रबल पचारि पचारी । लरत सुभट नहिं मानहिं हारी ॥ ३ ॥
महाबीर निसिचर सब कारे । नाना बरन बलीमुख भारे ॥
सबल जुगल दल समबल जोधा । कौतुक करत लरत करि क्रोधा ॥ ४ ॥
प्राबिट सरद पयोद घनेरे । लरत मनहुँ मारुत के प्रेरे ॥
अनिप अकंपन अरु अतिकाया । बिचलत सेन कीन्हि इन्ह माया ॥ ५ ॥
भयउ निमिष महँ अति अँधिआरा । बृष्टि होइ रुधिरोपल छारा ॥ ६ ॥

They bowed their head at the lotus feet of their Master, and the Lord of the Raghus was glad at heart to see the valiant warriors. Śrī Rāma graciously regarded them both and presently their fatigue was gone and they felt supremely happy. On learning that Angada and Hanumān had left, the numerous monkey and bear warriors retired from the field; while the demons, recovering their strength at nightfall, sallied forth, calling on their ten-headed lord. At the sight of the demon host the monkeys turned again; and gnashing their teeth in fury the champions closed with their opponents here and there. The two armies stood formidable; their champions challenging one another every time, came to a grim fight without giving in. The demons were all great warriors and dark in complexion; while the monkeys were stupendous in size and of numerous colours. The two armies were equally strong and the warriors too equally matched displaying their martial feats they fought with fury and looked like masses of rainy and autumnal clouds driven against one another by a strong wind. The generals Akampana and Atikāya (sons of Rāvaṇa), when they perceived their troops losing ground, employed Māyā (illusive devices); in an instant it grew pitch dark and there was a downpour of blood, stones and ashes. (1—6)

दो०—देखि निविड़ तम दसहुँ दिसि कपिदल भयउ खभार ।
एकहि एक न देखई जहँ तहँ करहिं पुकार ॥ ४६ ॥

Seeing the dense darkness all round, the monkey host was thrown into disorder. They could not see one another and there was an outcry everywhere. (46)

चौ०—सकल मरमु रघुनायक जाना । लिए बोलि अंगद हनुमाना ॥
समाचार सब कहि समुझाए । सुनत कोपि कपिकुंजर धाए ॥ १ ॥
पुनि कृपाल हँसि चाप चढ़ावा । पावक सायक सपदि चलावा ॥
भयउ प्रकास कतहुँ तम नाहीं । ग्यान उदयँ जिमि संसय जाहीं ॥ २ ॥
भालु बलीमुख पाइ प्रकासा । धाए हरष बिगत श्रम त्रासा ॥
हनूमान अंगद रन गाजे । हाँक सुनत रजनीचर भाजे ॥ ३ ॥
भागत भट पटकहिं धरि धरनी । करहिं भालु कपि अद्भुत करनी ॥
गहि पद डारहिं सागर माहीं । मकर उरग झष धरि धरि खाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord of the Raghus understood the secret of it all and summoned Angada and Hanumān. He apprised them of all that was going on and issued necessary instructions to them. The two monkey chiefs rushed forth in a fury as soon as they heard the instructions. The All-merciful then drew His bow with a smile and forthwith let fly a fiery dart. Lo ! there was light all round and no trace of darkness left anywhere, even as doubts disappear with the dawn of spiritual enlightenment. The bears and monkeys were relieved of their fatigue and rid of all fear when they saw light again, and pressed on exultingly. Hanumān and Angada thundered on the field of battle and the demons fled at their menacing roar. But the bears and monkeys seized the demon warriors in their flight and dashed them to the ground, performing marvellous feats of strength even as they did so,

or, catching them by the leg, hurled them into the ocean, where alligators, serpents and fish snapped them up and devoured them. (1—4)

दो०—कछु मारे कछु घायल कछु गढ़ चढ़े पराइ ।
गर्जहिं भालु बलीमुख रिपु दल बल बिचलाइ ॥ ४७ ॥

Some were killed, some more were wounded, while others scampered away and clambered the fort. Having thus scattered the hostile forces, the bears and monkeys gave a loud roar. (47)

चौ०—निसा जानि कपि चारिउ अनी । आए जहाँ कोसला धनी ॥
राम कृपा करि चितवा सबही । भए बिगतश्रम बानर तबही ॥ १ ॥
उहाँ दसानन सचिव हँकारे । सब सन कहेसि सुभट जे मारे ॥
आधा कटकु कपिन्ह संघारा । कहहु बेगि का करिअ बिचारा ॥ २ ॥
माल्यवंत अति जरठ निसाचर । रावन मातु पिता मंत्री बर ॥
बोला बचन नीति अति पावन । सुनहु तात कछु मोर सिखावन ॥ ३ ॥
जब ते तुम्ह सीता हरि आनी । असगुन होहिं न जाहिं बखानी ॥
बेद पुरान जासु जसु गायो । राम बिमुख काहुँ न सुख पायो ॥ ४ ॥

Perceiving that it was now night, all the four divisions of the monkey host returned to the camp of Kosala's lord. The monkeys were all relieved of their fatigue the moment Śrī Rāma cast His benign look on them. There (in Lankā) the ten-headed monster sent for all his ministers and told them about the warriors that had been killed in action. "The monkeys have disposed of half our forces; tell me at once what counsel should be adopted." Thereupon Mālyavān, a very aged demon, who was Rāvaṇa's maternal grandfather and an eminent counsellor, spoke words of highly devout wisdom: "Listen, my son, to a few words of advice from me. Ever since you carried off Sītā and brought Her here, there have been ill-omens more than one can tell. By opposing Śrī Rāma, whose glory has been the theme of the Vedas and Purāṇas, none has ever enjoyed happiness. (1—4)

दो०—हिरन्याच्छ भ्राता सहित मधु कैटभ बलवान ।
जेहिं मारे सोइ अवतरेउ कृपासिंधु भगवान ॥ ४८ (क) ॥

"The same gracious Lord who despatched Hiraṇyākṣa with his brother Hiraṇyakaśipu, as well as the mighty Madhu and Kaiṭabha, has descended on earth (in the person of Śrī Rāma) (48 A)

[PAUSE 25 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

दो०—कालरूप खल बन दहन गुनागार घनबोध ।
सिव बिरंचि जेहि सेवहिं तासों कवन बिरोध ॥ ४८ (ख) ॥

"Hostility is quite out of the question with Him who is the personification of the Time-Spirit (the principle of destruction), a fire to consume the forest in the shape of the wicked, a repository of virtues and an embodiment of wisdom, and who is adored even by Śiva and Brahmā. (48 B)

चौ०—परिहरि बयरु देहु बैदेही । भजहु कृपानिधि परम सनेही ॥
ताके बचन बान सम लागे । करिआ मुह करि जाहि अभागे ॥ १ ॥
बूढ़ भएसि न त मरतेउँ तोही । अब जनि नयन देखावसि मोही ॥
तेहिं अपने मन अस अनुमाना । बध्यो चहत एहि कृपानिधाना ॥ २ ॥
सो उठि गयउ कहत दुर्बादा । तब सकोप बोलेउ घननादा ॥
कौतुक प्रात देखिअहु मोरा । करिहउँ बहुत कहौं का थोरा ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि सुत बचन भरोसा आवा । प्रीति समेत अंक बैठावा ॥
करत बिचार भयउ भिनुसारा । लागे कपि पुनि चहूँ दुआरा ॥ ४ ॥
कोपि कपिन्ह दुर्घट गढ़ घेरा । नगर कोलाहलु भयउ घनेरा ॥
बिबिधायुध धर निसिचर धाए । गढ़ ते पर्बत सिखर ढहाए ॥ ५ ॥

"Giving up all quarrel with Śrī Rāma, restore Videha's Daughter to Him and worship the All-merciful, who has a most loving disposition." His words stung Rāvaṇa like shafts. "Away, wretch, with your accursed face. If it were not for your age, I would have finished you; now please do not appear before my eyes again." Mālyavān, however, thought within himself that the All-merciful would soon kill him; he, therefore, rose and departed, abusing Rāvaṇa as he went. Meghanāda thereupon exclaimed in a fury: "See what wonders I work the very next morning. I am going to accomplish much; why should I, therefore, belittle its worth by speaking of it just now ?" Confidence returned to Rāvaṇa when he heard his son's words; and he fondly took him into his lap. The day broke even while they deliberated, and the monkeys again assailed the four gates. In their fury they laid siege to the most powerful citadel. This gave rise to an uproarious alarm in the city. The demons darted forward with their weapons of every description and hurled down mountain-peaks from the ramparts.

(1—5)

छं०—ढाहे महीधर सिखर कोटिन्ह बिबिध बिधि गोला चले ।
घहरात जिमि पबिपात गर्जत जनु प्रलय के बादले ॥
मर्कट बिकट भट जुटत कटत न लटत तन जर्जर भए ।
गहि सैल तेहि गढ़ पर चलावहिं जहँ सो तहँ निसिचर हए ॥

The demons hurled mountain-peaks in myriads and fired bomb-shells of every description, which came roaring like a crash of thunder; while the contending warriors roared like the clouds on the day of universal destruction. Fierce monkey warriors combated with their adversaries and had their bodies severely wounded and badly battered; yet they languished not. Seizing rocks, they hurled them against the fort; and the demons fell to them wherever they stood.

दो०—मेघनाद सुनि श्रवन अस गढ़ु पुनि छेंका आइ ।
उतर्‌यो बीर दुर्ग तें सन्मुख चल्यो बजाइ ॥ ४९ ॥

When Meghanāda heard that the monkeys had come and besieged the fort again, the hero tore down the fort and sallied forth with beat of drum to meet the enemy face to face.

(49)

चौ०—कहँ कोसलाधीस द्वौ भ्राता । धन्वी सकल लोक बिख्याता ॥
कहँ नल नील दुबिद सुग्रीवा । अंगद हनूमंत बल सींवा ॥ १ ॥
कहाँ बिभीषनु भ्राताद्रोही । आजु सबहि हठि मारउँ ओही ॥
अस कहि कठिन बान संधाने । अतिसय क्रोध श्रवन लगि ताने ॥ २ ॥
सर समूह सो छाड़ै लागा । जनु सपच्छ धावहिं बहु नागा ॥
जहँ तहँ परत देखिअहिं बानर । सन्मुख होइ न सके तेहि अवसर ॥ ३ ॥
जहँ तहँ भागि चले कपि रीछा । बिसरी सबहि जुद्ध कै ईछा ॥
सो कपि भालु न रन महँ देखा । कीन्हेसि जेहि न प्रान अवसेषा ॥ ४ ॥

"Where are the two brother princes of Kosala, those archers celebrated throughout the spheres ? Where are Nala, Nīla, Dwivida and Sugrīva as well as Angada and Hanumān, the most powerful of all ? Where is Vibhīṣaṇa the traitor to his own brother ? I will kill them all today and him (Vibhīṣaṇa) too at all events." So saying, he fitted sharp arrows to his bow and in excess of fury drew the string up to his ear. Presently he started discharging a volley of arrows that flew like so many winged serpents. Everywhere monkeys were seen falling to the ground, at that time there was none who would dare to face him. Bears and monkeys fled in every direction; none had any desire left to continue the fight. Not a single monkey or bear was to be seen on the field, whom he had left with anything but life. (1—4)

दो०—दस दस सर सब मारेसि परे भूमि कपि बीर ।
सिंहनाद करि गर्जा मेघनाद बल धीर ॥ ५० ॥

He struck his opponents with ten arrows each, and the monkey warriors dropped to the ground. Meghanāda, who was as powerful as he was staunch in fight, now roared like a lion. (50)

चौ०—देखि पवनसुत कटक बिहाला । क्रोधवंत जनु धायउ काला ॥
महासैल एक तुरत उपारा । अति रिस मेघनाद पर डारा ॥ १ ॥
आवत देखि गयउ नभ सोई । रथ सारथी तुरग सब खोई ॥
बार बार पचार हनुमाना । निकट न आव मरमु सो जाना ॥ २ ॥
रघुपति निकट गयउ घननादा । नाना भाँति करेसि दुर्बादा ॥
अस्त्र सस्त्र आयुध सब डारे । कौतुकहीं प्रभु काटि निवारे ॥ ३ ॥
देखि प्रताप मूढ़ खिसिआना । करै लाग माया बिधि नाना ॥
जिमि कोउ करै गरुड़ सैं खेला । डरपावै गहि स्वल्प सपेला ॥ ४ ॥

When the son of the wind-god saw his army in distress, he flew into a rage and rushed forth as if he were death personified. He forthwith tore up a huge rock and hurled it at Meghanāda with great fury. When he saw the rock coming towards him, he mounted up into the air, leaving his car, charioteer and horses to perish. Again and again did Hanumān challenge him to a duel, but the demon dared not come nearer; for he knew the monkey's real strength. Meghanāda now approached Śrī Rāma and hurled every kind of abuse at Him.

He tried weapons and missiles of every description against Him; but the Lord with the utmost ease cut them asunder before they could reach Him. The fool was put out of countenance when he saw the Lord's might, and began to practise all sorts of illusive devices, as if catching hold of a poor little snake-ling one were to frighten Garuḍa and sport with him. (1—4)

दो०—जासु प्रबल माया बस सिव बिरंचि बड़ छोट ।
ताहि दिखावइ निसिचर निज माया मति खोट ॥ ५१ ॥

The evil-minded demon displayed his demoniac powers before Him whose powerful Māyā (deluding potency) holds sway over all, both great and small, Śiva and Viranchi (the Creator) not excepted. (51)

चौ०—नभ चढ़ि बरष बिपुल अंगारा । महि ते प्रगट होहिं जलधारा ॥
नाना भाँति पिसाच पिसाची । मारु काटु धुनि बोलहिं नाची ॥ १ ॥
बिष्टा पूय रुधिर कच हाड़ा । बरषइ कबहुँ उपल बहु छाड़ा ॥
बरषि धूरि कीन्हेसि अँधिआरा । सूझ न आपन हाथ पसारा ॥ २ ॥
कपि अकुलाने माया देखें । सब कर मरन बना एहि लेखें ॥
कौतुक देखि राम मुसुकाने । भए सभीत सकल कपि जाने ॥ ३ ॥
एक बान काटी सब माया । जिमि दिनकर हर तिमिर निकाया ॥
कृपादृष्टि कपि भालु बिलोके । भए प्रबल रन रहहिं न रोके ॥ ४ ॥

Mounting up into the air he rained down a shower of firebrands, and spouts of water issued forth from the earth. Fiends and fiendesses of diverse form danced with cries of "Maim and kill !" Now he would rain down showers of faeces, pus, blood, hair and bones; and now he would hurl a volley of stones. By discharging dust all round he made it so dark that if you held out your own hand you would not see it. The monkeys lost their nerve when they saw these supernatural phenomena. "At this rate we are all doomed," they thought. Śrī Rāma smiled when he saw this fun; at the same time He understood that the monkeys were all alarmed. With a single arrow He broke the illusive web, even as the sun removes the thick veil of darkness. He cast a gracious look on the monkeys and bears, and lo ! they grew too strong to be restrained from fighting. (1—4)

दो०—आयसु मागि राम पहिं अंगदादि कपि साथ ।
लछिमन चले क्रुद्ध होइ बान सरासन हाथ ॥ ५२ ॥

Asking leave of Śrī Rāma and accompanied by Angada and other monkey chiefs, Lakṣmaṇa marched forth in fury, bow and arrow in hand. (52)

चौ०—छतज नयन उर बाहु बिसाला । हिमगिरि निभ तनु कछु एक लाला ॥
इहाँ दसानन सुभट पठाए । नाना अस्त्र सस्त्र गहि धाए ॥ १ ॥
भूधर नख बिटपायुध धारी । धाए कपि जय राम पुकारी ॥
भिरे सकल जोरिहि सन जोरी । इत उत जय इच्छा नहिं थोरी ॥ २ ॥

मुठिकन्ह लातन्ह दातन्ह काटहिं । कपि जयसील मारि पुनि डाटहिं ॥
मारु मारु धरु धरु धरु मारू । सीस तोरि गहि भुजा उपारू ॥ ३ ॥
असि रव पूरि रही नव खंडा । धावहिं जहँ तहँ रुंड प्रचंडा ॥
देखहिं कौतुक नभ सुर बृंदा । कबहुँक बिसमय कबहुँ अनंदा ॥ ४ ॥

With bloodshot eyes, a broad chest and long arms, his white form shone like the snow-clad Himālaya with a slight admixture of red. At the other end the ten-headed monster sent out champions, who rushed forth equipped with missiles and other weapons of every description. With mountains, claws and trees for weapons, the monkeys hastened to meet the demons, shouting "Victory to Rāma." They all closed in the fray, match with match, both the sides equally agog to win. The monkeys, who had now the upper hand, battered the demons with their fists and feet and bit them with their teeth. They struck them down and browbeat them. "Kill, kill, seize, seize, seize, slay, break his head, seize his arm and tear it up!"—such were the cries that filled the air through all the nine divisions of the globe. Headless bodies sprinted furiously hither and thither. Hosts of celestials witnessed the spectacle from heaven, now with joy and now in dismay. (1—4)

दो०—रुधिर गाड़ भरि भरि जम्यो ऊपर धूरि उड़ाइ ।
जनु अँगार रासिन्ह पर मृतक धूम रह्यो छाइ ॥ ५३ ॥

Blood had collected in the hollows of the earth and dried up there and clouds of dust hung over it like ashes over heaps of live coal. (53)

चौ०—घायल बीर बिराजहिं कैसे । कुसुमित किंसुक के तरु जैसे ॥
लछिमन मेघनाद द्वौ जोधा । भिरहिं परसपर करि अति क्रोधा ॥ १ ॥
एकहि एक सकइ नहिं जीती । निसिचर छल बल करइ अनीती ॥
क्रोधवंत तब भयउ अनंता । भंजेउ रथ सारथी तुरंता ॥ २ ॥
नाना बिधि प्रहार कर सेषा । राच्छस भयउ प्रान अवसेषा ॥
रावन सुत निज मन अनुमाना । संकठ भयउ हरिहि मम प्राना ॥ ३ ॥
बीरघातिनी छाड़िसि साँगी । तेज पुंज लछिमन उर लागी ॥
मुरुछा भई सक्ति के लागें । तब चलि गयउ निकट भय त्यागें ॥ ४ ॥

The wounded warriors shone like so many Kiṁśuka* trees in flower. The two champions, Lakṣmaṇa and Meghanāda, grappled with each other in mounting fury. Neither could get the better of the other. The demon, however, resorted to wily tricks and unfair means. Lakṣmaṇa, who was no other than Ananta (the serpent-god Śeṣa, whose wrath brings about the dissolution of the universe), then waxed furious and in a trice smashed the chariot and tore its driver to pieces. Śeṣa (Lakṣmaṇa) smote him in so many ways that the demon (Meghanāda) was all but dead. The son of Rāvaṇa thought

* A Kiṁśuka tree bears crimson flowers; hence the wounded parts of the warriors have been compared with the flowers of a Kiṁśuka tree.

within himself that he was in straits and the enemy would surely take his life. He threw a javelin which was notorious for killing warriors and was all brilliance; and lo ! it struck Lakṣmaṇa in the breast. The blow was so smart that the prince swooned and Meghanāda now went near him shedding all fear. (1—4)

दो०—मेघनाद सम कोटि सत जोधा रहे उठाइ ।
जगदाधार सेष ,किमि उठै चले खिसिआइ ॥ ५४ ॥

A vast number of champions as powerful as Meghanāda strove to lift him; but how could Śeṣa, the support of the entire globe, be thus lifted ? Hence they returned smarting with shame. (54)

चौ०—सुनु गिरिजा क्रोधानल जासू । जारइ भुवन चारिदस आसू ॥
सक संग्राम जीति को ताही । सेवहिं सुर नर अग जग जाही ॥ १ ॥
यह कौतूहल जानइ सोई । जा पर कृपा राम कै होई ॥
संध्या भइ फिरि द्वौ बाहनी । लगे सँभारन निज निज अनी ॥ २ ॥
ब्यापक ब्रह्म अजित भुवनेस्वर । लछिमन कहाँ बूझ करुनाकर ॥
तब लगि लै आयउ हनुमाना । अनुज देखि प्रभु अति दुख माना ॥ ३ ॥
जामवंत कह बैद सुषेना । लंकाँ रहइ को पठई लेना ॥
धरि लघु रूप गयउ हनुमंता । आनेउ भवन समेत तुरंता ॥ ४ ॥

Listen, Pārvatī: (continues Lord Śaṅkara,) none can conquer him in battle, the fire of whose wrath speedily consumes all the fourteen spheres (at the time of universal dissolution), and whom gods and human beings, nay, all animate and inanimate beings adore. He alone can understand this mystery, on whom descends Śrī Rāma's grace. Now that it was evening, both the armies retired and the commanders of the different units began taking count of their troops. The all-merciful and invincible Lord of the universe, the all-pervading supreme Spirit, asked: "Where is Lakṣmaṇa ?" Meanwhile Hanumān brought him; seeing His younger brother (in a swoon) the Lord felt sore distressed. Jāmbavān said, "Suṣeṇa, the physician, lives in Laṅkā; someone should be sent to fetch him here." Assuming a minute (indiscernible) form Hanumān went and immediately brought him, house and all. (1—4)

दो०—राम पदारबिंद सिर नायउ आइ सुषेन ।
कहा नाम गिरि औषधी जाहु पवनसुत लेन ॥ ५५ ॥

Suṣeṇa came and bowed his head at Śrī Rāma's lotus feet. He mentioned the name of the herb as well as of the mountain where it could be had, and said, "Proceed, O son of the wind-god, to bring it." (55)

चौ०—राम चरन सरसिज उर राखी । चला प्रभंजनसुत बल भाषी ॥
उहाँ दूत एक मरमु जनावा । रावनु कालनेमि गृह आवा ॥ १ ॥
दसमुख कहा मरमु तेहिं सुना । पुनि पुनि कालनेमि सिरु धुना ॥
देखत तुम्हहि नगरु जेहिं जारा । तासु पंथ को रोकन पारा ॥ २ ॥

भजि रघुपति करु हित आपना । छाँड़हु नाथ मृषा जल्पना ॥
नील कंज तनु सुंदर स्यामा । हृदयँ राखु लोचनाभिरामा ॥ ३ ॥
मैं तैं मोर मूढ़ता त्यागू । महा मोह निसि सूतत जागू ॥
काल ब्याल कर भच्छक जोई । सपनेहुँ समर कि जीतिअ सोई ॥ ४ ॥

Enshrining Śrī Rāma's lotus feet in his heart and assuring the Lord of his own might, the son of the wind-god departed. At the other end a spy disclosed the secret to Rāvaṇa, who called at the house of Kālanemi (a demon ally of Rāvaṇa). The ten-headed monster told him all that he had to say, hearing which Kālanemi beat his head again and again. "Nobody can obstruct him who burnt your capital before your very eyes. Therefore, adore the Lord of the Raghus in your own interest and desist, my lord, from all vain prattle. Hold in your heart that lovely form, swarthy as the blue lotus, the delight of all eyes. Dismiss the foolish idea of 'I' and 'You', mine and thine and awake from slumber in the night of gross infatuation. Can anyone even dream of conquering Him in battle, who devours even the serpent of Time (which in its turn devours the entire creation)?" (1—4)

दो०—सुनि दसकंठ रिसान अति तेहिं मन कीन्ह बिचार ।
राम दूत कर मरौं बरु यह खल रत मल भार ॥ ५६ ॥

The ten-headed monster flew into a tearing rage when he heard this. Thereupon Kālanemi reasoned to himself: "I should rather die at the hands of Śrī Rāma's servant; for this wretch revels in his load of sins!" (56)

चौ०—अस कहि चला रचिसि मग माया । सर मंदिर बर बाग बनाया ॥
मारुतसुत देखा सुभ आश्रम । मुनिहि बूझि जल पियौं जाइ श्रम ॥ १ ॥
राच्छस कपट बेष तहँ सोहा । मायापति दूतहि चह मोहा ॥
जाइ पवनसुत नायउ माथा । लाग सो कहै राम गुन गाथा ॥ २ ॥
होत महा रन रावन रामहिं । जितिहहिं राम न संसय या महिं ॥
इहाँ भएँ मैं देखउँ भाई । ग्यानदृष्टि बल मोहि अधिकाई ॥ ३ ॥
मागा जल तेहिं दीन्ह कमंडल । कह कपि नहिं अघाउँ थोरें जल ॥
सर मज्जन करि आतुर आवहु । दिच्छा देउँ ग्यान जेहिं पावहु ॥ ४ ॥

So saying to himself he departed and resorted to his black art; he produced by the path a lake, a temple and a lovely garden. The son of the wind-god saw the good hermitage and thought to himself: "Let me ask leave of the hermit over there and drink some water, so that I may be relieved of my fatigue." The demon (Kālanemi) had ensconced himself there in the deceitful garb of a hermit and sought to delude the messenger even of the Lord of Māyā. The son of the wind-god went and bowed his head before him; and the demon in his turn began to recite Śrī Rāma's praises. "A fierce war is raging between Śrī Rāma and Rāvaṇa, of which Rāma will undoubtedly emerge victorious. I behold everything, my brother, even from here; for my great strength lies in my intuition." On his asking for water, the demon gave Hanumān his own water-pot; but the monkey chief said, "My

thirst will not be quenched by a small quantity of water." "Then take a plunge in the lake and speedily come back. After that I will initiate you and you will have spiritual insight." (1—4)

दो०—सर पैठत कपि पद गहा मकरीं तब अकुलान ।
मारी सो धरि दिव्य तनु चली गगन चढ़ि जान ॥ ५७ ॥

No sooner had Hanumān stepped into the lake than a she-alligator seized him by the foot in great excitement. Having been slain by Hanumān, she assumed a celestial form and, mounting an aerial car, soared into the heavens. (57)

चौ०—कपि तव दरस भइउँ निष्पापा । मिटा तात मुनिबर कर सापा ॥
मुनि न होइ यह निसिचर घोरा । मानहु सत्य बचन कपि मोरा ॥ १ ॥
अस कहि गई अपछरा जबहीं । निसिचर निकट गयउ कपि तबहीं ॥
कह कपि मुनि गुरदछिना लेहू । पाछें हमहि मंत्र तुम्ह देहू ॥ २ ॥
सिर लंगूर लपेटि पछारा । निज तनु प्रगटेसि मरती बारा ॥
राम राम कहि छाड़ेसि प्राना । सुनि मन हरषि चलेउ हनुमाना ॥ ३ ॥
देखा सैल न औषध चीन्हा । सहसा कपि उपारि गिरि लीन्हा ॥
गहि गिरि निसि नभ धावत भयऊ । अवधपुरी ऊपर कपि गयऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"By your very sight, O dear monkey, I have been absolved of all sins and the curse of the great sage (which accounted for my birth in an alligator's womb) has come to an end. This fellow, O monkey chief, is no hermit but a terrible demon: believe my words to be true." So saying, the celestial nymph left for her abode in heaven and Hanumān immediately returned to the demon. Said the monkey: "First receive, holy sir, your fee as my spiritual preceptor and after that impart to me the sacred formula." Hanumān then twisted his tail round the hermit's head and knocked him down, and he appeared in his natural (demoniac) form at the moment of his death and gave up the ghost while muttering "Rāma, Rāma". Hanumān was delighted at heart to hear this name and proceeded on his journey. He found the mountain but failed to single out the herb (prescribed by Suṣeṇa); he, therefore, lost no time in uprooting the mount itself. Holding up the mountain in his hand, Hanumān darted back through the air while it was yet night and happened to pass over the city of Ayodhyā. (1—4)

दो०—देखा भरत बिसाल अति निसिचर मन अनुमानि ।
बिनु फर सायक मारेउ चाप श्रवन लगि तानि ॥ ५८ ॥

Bharata (who kept vigil at night ever since his return from Chitrakūṭa) espied a colossal figure coursing through the air and thinking it to be some demon drew his bow to the ear and struck him with a headless shaft. (58)

चौ०—परेउ मुरुछि महि लागत सायक । सुमिरत राम राम रघुनायक ॥
सुनि प्रिय बचन भरत तब धाए । कपि समीप अति आतुर आए ॥ १ ॥

बिकल बिलोकि कीस उर लावा । जागत नहिं बहु भाँति जगावा ॥
मुख मलीन मन भए दुखारी । कहत बचन भरि लोचन बारी ॥ २ ॥
जेहिं बिधि राम बिमुख मोहि कीन्हा । तेहिं पुनि यह दारुन दुख दीन्हा ॥
जौं मोरें मन बच अरु काया । प्रीति राम पद कमल अमाया ॥ ३ ॥
तौ कपि होउ बिगत श्रम सूला । जौं मो पर रघुपति अनुकूला ॥
सुनत बचन उठि बैठ कपीसा । कहि जय जयति कोसलाधीसा ॥ ४ ॥

Struck by the dart, Hanumān dropped unconscious to the ground, crying "Rāma, Rāma, O Lord of the Raghus !" The moment Bharata heard these pleasing words he rushed and came post-haste by the side of the monkey. Seeing the monkey in swoon, the prince clasped him to his bosom and tried every means to bring him back to consciousness but in vain. With a sad look in his face and much distressed at heart and his eyes full of tears, he spoke the following words: "The self-same Providence who alienated me from Śrī Rāma has also inflicted this terrible suffering on me. If in thought, word and deed I cherish sincere devotion to Śrī Rāma's lotus feet, and if the Lord of the Raghus is kindly disposed towards me, may this monkey be relieved of all exhaustion and pain." As soon as these words entered his ears the monkey chief arose and sat up, crying "Glory, all glory to the Lord of Kosala !" (1–4)

सो०—लीन्ह कपिहि उर लाइ पुलकित तनु लोचन सजल ।
प्रीति न हृदयँ समाइ सुमिरि राम रघुकुल तिलक ॥ ५९ ॥

A thrill of joy ran through his body and tears rushed to his eyes as Bharata took and clasped the monkey to his bosom. His heart overflowed with love at the very thought of Śrī Rāma, the glory of Raghu's race. (59)

चौ०—तात कुसल कहु सुखनिधान की । सहित अनुज अरु मातु जानकी ॥
कपि सब चरित समास बखाने । भए दुखी मन महुँ पछिताने ॥ १ ॥
अहह दैव मैं कत जग जायउँ । प्रभु के एकहु काज न आयउँ ॥
जानि कुअवसरु मन धरि धीरा । पुनि कपि सन बोले बलबीरा ॥ २ ॥
तात गहरु होइहि तोहि जाता । काजु नसाइहि होत प्रभाता ॥
चढ़ु मम सायक सैल समेता । पठवौं तोहि जहँ कृपानिकेता ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि कपि मन उपजा अभिमाना । मोरें भार चलिहि किमि बाना ॥
राम प्रभाव बिचारि बहोरी । बंदि चरन कह कपि कर जोरी ॥ ४ ॥

"Tell me, dear friend, if all is well with Śrī Rāma, the Fountain of Joy, as well as with His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and my mother Jānakī (Janaka's Daughter)." The monkey chief told him in brief all that had happened and Bharata felt much distressed to hear it and his heart was filled with remorse. "Ah me, good heavens, why should I have been born into this world at all, if I could not be of any service to the Lord ?" But realizing the adverse circumstances, the gallant and mighty prince recollected himself and addressed

Hanumān again, "You will be delayed in your journey and nothing will avail after daybreak. Therefore, ascend my arrow, mountain and all, and I will send you straight into the presence of the All-merciful." Hanumān's pride was tickled when he heard these words. "How will the arrow fly with my weight ?" he thought. Then, recalling Śrī Rāma's glory, he bowed at Bharata's feet and spoke with joined palms:— (1—4)

दो०—तव प्रताप उर राखि प्रभु जैहउँ नाथ तुरंत।
अस कहि आयसु पाइ पद बंदि चलेउ हनुमंत ॥ ६० (क) ॥
भरत बाहु बल सील गुन प्रभु पद प्रीति अपार।
मन महुँ जात सराहत पुनि पुनि पवनकुमार ॥ ६० (ख) ॥

"Cherishing the thought of your majesty, my lord, I will go swiftly." So saying and obtaining leave of Bharata, Hanumān bowed at his feet and sped on. As he journeyed forth, the son of the wind-god extolled to himself again and again Bharata's strength of arm, amiability and goodness as well as his boundless devotion to the Lord's feet. (60 A-B)

चौ०—उहाँ राम लछिमनहि निहारी। बोले बचन मनुज अनुसारी ॥
अर्ध राति गइ कपि नहिं आयउ। राम उठाइ अनुज उर लायउ ॥ १ ॥
सकहु न दुखित देखि मोहि काऊ। बंधु सदा तव मृदुल सुभाऊ ॥
मम हित लागि तजेहु पितु माता। सहेहु बिपिन हिम आतप बाता ॥ २ ॥
सो अनुराग कहाँ अब भाई। उठहु न सुनि मम बच बिकलाई ॥
जौं जनतेउँ बन बंधु बिछोहू। पिता बचन मनतेउँ नहिं ओहू ॥ ३ ॥
सुत बित नारि भवन परिवारा। होहिं जाहिं जग बारहिं बारा ॥
अस बिचारि जियँ जागहु ताता। मिलइ न जगत सहोदर भ्राता ॥ ४ ॥
जथा पंख बिनु खग अति दीना। मनि बिनु फनि करिबर कर हीना ॥
अस मम जिवन बंधु बिनु तोही। जौं जड़ दैव जिआवै मोही ॥ ५ ॥
जैहउँ अवध कौन मुहु लाई। नारि हेतु प्रिय भाइ गँवाई ॥
बरु अपजस सहतेउँ जग माहीं। नारि हानि बिसेष छति नाहीं ॥ ६ ॥
अब अपलोकु सोकु सुत तोरा। सहिहि निठुर कठोर उर मोरा ॥
निज जननी के एक कुमारा। तात तासु तुम्ह प्रान अधारा ॥ ७ ॥
सौंपेसि मोहि तुम्हहि गहि पानी। सब बिधि सुखद परम हित जानी ॥
उतरु काह दैहउँ तेहि जाई। उठि किन मोहि सिखावहु भाई ॥ ८ ॥
बहु बिधि सोचत सोच बिमोचन। स्रवत सलिल राजिव दल लोचन ॥
उमा एक अखंड रघुराई। नर गति भगत कृपाल देखाई ॥ ९ ॥

Now, there on Suvela Śrī Rāma uttered words befitting a mortal as He looked at Lakṣmaṇa, "Although it is now past midnight, Hanumān has not yet turned up!" Śrī Rāma raised His younger brother and clasped him to His bosom. "Brother, you could never bear to see me in distress, since your disposition has always been so tender. On my account you left both

father and mother and exposed yourself to the cold, the heat and the winds of the forest. Where is that old love now, brother, that you refuse to get up even on hearing my lament? Had I known that I would lose my brother in the forest, I would never have obeyed even my father's command. Sons, riches, wives, houses and kinsfolk in this world repeatedly come and go; but a real brother cannot be had again in this world. Ponder this in your mind and arise, dear brother. As a bird is utterly miserable without wings, a serpent without its head-jewel and a noble elephant without its trunk, so is my life without you, brother, in case stupid fate compels me to survive. With what face shall I return to Ayodhyā after sacrificing a beloved brother for the sake of my wife. I would rather have suffered obloquy in the world (for my inability to recover my wife); for after all the loss of a wife is not a serious loss. Now, however, my unfeeling and stony heart will endure both that obloquy and the deep anguish of your loss, my son. Your mother's only son, you are the sole prop of her life. Yet she took you by the hand and entrusted you to me, knowing that I would make you happy in every way and that I am your greatest well-wisher. What answer shall I give her when I go back? Why should you not get up and advise me, brother?" Thus lamented the Dispeller of sorrow in diverse ways; and tears flowed from His eyes which resembled the petals of a lotus. Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) the Lord of the Raghus is one (without a second) and indivisible; He exhibited the ways of human beings only because He is so compassionate to His devotees. (1—9)

सो०—प्रभु प्रलाप सुनि कान बिकल भए बानर निकर ।
आइ गयउ हनुमान जिमि करुना महँ बीर रस ॥ ६१ ॥

The hosts of monkeys that surrounded the Lord were distressed to hear the Lord's frantic wailing. Presently arrived Hanumān like a heroic strain in the midst of pathos. (61)

चौ०—हरषि राम भेंटेउ हनुमाना । अति कृतग्य प्रभु परम सुजाना ॥
तुरत बैद तब कीन्हि उपाई । उठि बैठे लछिमन हरषाई ॥ १ ॥
हृदयँ लाइ प्रभु भेंटेउ भ्राता । हरषे सकल भालु कपि ब्राता ॥
कपि पुनि बैद तहाँ पहुँचावा । जेहि बिधि तबहिं ताहि लइ आवा ॥ २ ॥
यह बृत्तांत दसानन सुनेऊ । अति बिषाद पुनि पुनि सिर धुनेऊ ॥
ब्याकुल कुंभकरन पहिं आवा । बिबिध जतन करि ताहि जगावा ॥ ३ ॥
जागा निसिचर देखिअ कैसा । मानहुँ कालु देह धरि बैसा ॥
कुंभकरन बूझा कहु भाई । काहे तव मुख रहे सुखाई ॥ ४ ॥
कथा कही सब तेहिं अभिमानी । जेहि प्रकार सीता हरि आनी ॥
तात कपिन्ह सब निसिचर मारे । महा महा जोधा संघारे ॥ ५ ॥
दुर्मुख सुररिपु मनुज अहारी । भट अतिकाय अकंपन भारी ॥
अपर महोदर आदिक बीरा । परे समर महि सब रनधीरा ॥ ६ ॥

Transported with joy, Śrī Rāma embraced Hanumān; for the Lord is exceedingly grateful by nature and supremely wise. The physician (Suṣeṇa)

then immediately applied the remedy and Lakṣmaṇa cheerfully rose and sat up. The Lord clasped His brother to His heart and the whole host of bears and monkeys was rejoiced. Hanumān took the physician back to Lankā in the same way he had brought him the previous night. When the ten-headed monster heard this news, he beat his head in utter despair again and again. In sore perplexity he called on Kumbhakarṇa (his younger brother) and succeeded in waking him by using all sorts of devices. Having woken and sat up, he looked like Death himself in a corporeal body. Kumbhakarṇa asked: "Tell me, brother, why do you look so withered up?" The haughty Rāvaṇa told him the whole story as to how he had carried off Sītā. "Dear brother, the monkeys have killed all the demons and extirpated the greatest warriors. Durmukha, Devāntaka (the enemy of gods), Narāntaka (the devourer of men), the mighty champions Atikāya (of enormous size) and Akampana (who never trembles in fear) and other heroes like Mahodara (the big-bellied), so staunch in battle, have all fallen on the field of battle." (1—6)

दो०—सुनि दसकंधर बचन तब कुंभकरन बिलखान ।
जगदंबा हरि आनि अब सठ चाहत कल्यान ॥ ६२ ॥

On hearing the words of his ten-headed brother, Kumbhakarṇa felt very sorry. "Having carried off the Mother of the universe, O fool, you still expect good out of it!

(62)

चौ०—भल न कीन्ह तैं निसिचर नाहा । अब मोहि आइ जगाएहि काहा ॥
अजहूँ तात त्यागि अभिमाना । भजहु राम होइहि कल्याना ॥ १ ॥
हैं दससीस मनुज रघुनायक । जाके हनूमान से पायक ॥
अहह बंधु तैं कीन्हि खोटाई । प्रथमहिं मोहि न सुनाएहि आई ॥ २ ॥
कीन्हेहु प्रभु बिरोध तेहि देवक । सिव बिरंचि सुर जाके सेवक ॥
नारद मुनि मोहि ग्यान जो कहा । कहतेउँ तोहि समय निरबहा ॥ ३ ॥
अब भरि अंकु भेंटु मोहि भाई । लोचन सुफल करौं मैं जाई ॥
स्याम गात सरसीरुह लोचन । देखौं जाइ ताप त्रय मोचन ॥ ४ ॥

"You have not acted well, O demon king. And now why have you come and woke me up? Yet, abandoning pride, worship Śrī Rāma and you will be blessed. Can the Lord of the Raghus, O ten-headed Rāvaṇa, be a man, who has couriers like Hanumān? Alas, brother, you acted unwisely in that you did not break this news to me earlier. You have courted war with the Divinity who has for His servants gods like Śiva and Virañchi (the Creator). I would have confided to you the secret which the sage Nārada had once imparted to me; but the time has passed. Squeeze me, brother, in close embrace now, so that I may go and bless my eyes with the sight of the Lord who has a swarthy complexion and lotus-like eyes and who relieves the threefold agony of His devotees." (1—4)

दो०—राम रूप गुन सुमिरत मगन भयउ छन एक ।
रावन मागेउ कोटि घट मद अरु महिष अनेक ॥ ६३ ॥

As he thought of Śrī Rāma's beauty and virtues he forgot himself for a moment. In the meantime Rāvaṇa requisitioned (for his consumption) myriads of jars full of wine and a whole herd of buffaloes. (63)

चौ०—महिष खाइ करि मदिरा पाना । गर्जा बज्राघात समाना ॥
कुंभकरन दुर्मद रन रंगा । चला दुर्ग तजि सेन न संगा ॥ १ ॥
देखि बिभीषनु आगें आयउ । परेउ चरन निज नाम सुनायउ ॥
अनुज उठाइ हृदयँ तेहि लायो । रघुपति भक्त जानि मन भायो ॥ २ ॥
तात लात रावन मोहि मारा । कहत परम हित मंत्र बिचारा ॥
तेहिं गलानि रघुपति पहिं आयउँ । देखि दीन प्रभु के मन भायउँ ॥ ३ ॥
सुनु सुत भयउ कालबस रावन । सो कि मान अब परम सिखावन ॥
धन्य धन्य तैं धन्य बिभीषन । भयहु तात निसिचर कुल भूषन ॥ ४ ॥
बंधु बंस तैं कीन्ह उजागर । भजेहु राम सोभा सुख सागर ॥ ५ ॥

Having feasted on the buffaloes and drunk off the wine, Kumbhakarṇa roared like a crash of lightning. Heavily drunk and full of passion for war he sallied forth from the fort without any troops. When Vibhīṣaṇa saw him, he came forward and falling at his feet told him his name. Kumbhakarṇa in his turn lifted his younger brother and clasped him to his bosom; he was delighted at heart to know that his brother was a devotee of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). "Dear brother, Rāvaṇa spurned me with his foot when I gave him a most salutary advice and told him my view. Disgusted with such treatment I came away to Śrī Rāma, and the Lord's heart was drawn towards me when he perceived my distress." "Listen, my son: Rāvaṇa is in the clutches of death and would not listen even to the best advice at this stage. Thrice blessed are you, Vibhīṣaṇa; you have proved to be the ornament of the demon race. Brother, you have brought glory to our line by adoring Śrī Rāma, that ocean of beauty and felicity. (1—5)

दो०—बचन कर्म मन कपट तजि भजेहु राम रनधीर ।
जाहु न निज पर सूझ मोहि भयउँ कालबस बीर ॥ ६४ ॥

"In thought, word and deed you should guilelessly worship Śrī Rāma, who is staunch in battle Now leave me; for, doomed as I am to death, brother, I can no longer distinguish between friend and foe." (64)

चौ०—बंधु बचन सुनि चला बिभीषन । आयउ जहँ त्रैलोक बिभूषन ॥
नाथ भूधराकार सरीरा । कुंभकरन आवत रनधीरा ॥ १ ॥
एतना कपिन्ह सुना जब काना । किलकिलाइ धाए बलवाना ॥
लिए उठाइ बिटप अरु भूधर । कटकटाइ डारहिं ता ऊपर ॥ २ ॥
कोटि कोटि गिरि सिखर प्रहारा । करहिं भालु कपि एक एक बारा ॥
मुर्‌यो न मनु तनु टर्‌यो न टार्‌यो । जिमि गज अर्क फलनि को मार्‌यो ॥ ३ ॥
तब मारुतसुत मुठिका हन्यो । पर्‌यो धरनि ब्याकुल सिर धुन्यो ॥
पुनि उठि तेहिं मारेउ हनुमंता । घुर्मित भूतल परेउ तुरंता ॥ ४ ॥

पुनि नल नीलहि अवनि पछारेसि । जहँ तहँ पटकि पटकि भट डारेसि ॥
चली बलीमुख सेन पराई । अति भय त्रसित न कोउ समुहाई ॥ ५ ॥

On hearing the words of his brother (Kumbhakarṇa) Vibhīṣaṇa turned back and came into the presence of Śrī Rāma (the Ornament of the three spheres). "My lord, here comes Kumbhakarṇa, possessed of a body huge as a mountain and staunch in battle !" The moment the mighty monkeys heard this they rushed forth crying with joy. They plucked up trees and mountains and hurled them against Kumbhakarṇa gnashing their teeth all the while. The bears and monkeys threw myriads of mountain-peaks at him each time. But neither he felt daunted in spirit nor did he stir from his position in spite of the best efforts on the part of the monkeys to push him back, even like an elephant pelted with the fruits of the sun-plant. Thereupon Hanumān struck him with his fist and he fell to the earth beating his head in great confusion. Rising again he hit Hanumān back and the latter whirled round and immediately dropped to the ground. Next he overthrew Nala and Nīla upon the ground and knocked down the warriors here, there and everywhere. The monkey host stampeded; in utter dismay none dared face him. (1—5)

दो०—अंगदादि कपि मुरुछित करि समेत सुग्रीव ।
काँख दाबि कपिराज कहुँ चला अमित बल सींव ॥ ६५ ॥

Having rendered unconscious Angada and the other principal monkeys including Sugrīva, Kumbhakarṇa, who was of unbounded might, nay, the very perfection of strength, pressed the king of the monkeys under his arm and went off. (65)

चौ०—उमा करत रघुपति नरलीला । खेलत गरुड़ जिमि अहिगन मीला ॥
भृकुटि भंग जो कालहि खाई । ताहि कि सोहइ ऐसि लराई ॥ १ ॥
जग पावनि कीरति बिस्तरिहहिं । गाइ गाइ भवनिधि नर तरिहहिं ॥
मुरुछा गइ मारुतसुत जागा । सुग्रीवहि तब खोजन लागा ॥ २ ॥
सुग्रीवहु कै मुरुछा बीती । निबुकि गयउ तेहि मृतक प्रतीती ॥
काटेसि दसन नासिका काना । गरजि अकास चलेउ तेहिं जाना ॥ ३ ॥
गहेउ चरन गहि भूमि पछारा । अति लाघवँ उठि पुनि तेहि मारा ॥
पुनि आयउ प्रभु पहिं बलवाना । जयति जयति जय कृपा निधाना ॥ ४ ॥
नाक कान काटे जियँ जानी । फिरा क्रोध करि भइ मन ग्लानी ॥
सहज भीम पुनि बिनु श्रुति नासा । देखत कपि दल उपजी त्रासा ॥ ५ ॥

Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) the Lord of the Raghus played the part of a human being in the same way as Garuḍa (the mount of Bhagavān Viṣṇu) would sport in the company of snakes. Otherwise how could He who devours Death himself with the mere knitting of His brows engage with any grace in such a conflict as this? He will thereby spread His fame, which will not only sanctify the whole world but will undoubtedly take across the ocean of mundane existence the people who sing it. Now Hanumān's unconsciousness ceased and he woke and presently began to look about for Sugrīva. Meanwhile

Sugrīva too recovered from his swoon and slipped out of Kumbhakarṇa's grip, who had taken him for dead (and consequently loosened his grip). Kumbhakarṇa discovered his escape only when Sugrīva bit off the monster's nose and ears and ascended into the air roaring. The demon caught Sugrīva by the foot and, having thus secured him, dashed him against the ground. Sugrīva, however, rose with remarkable agility and hit his adversary back. The mighty hero then returned into the Lord's presence, shouting "Glory, glory, all glory to the merciful Lord!" Kumbhakarṇa felt sick at heart when he realized that he had been deprived of his nose and ears, and turned back in a fury. The monkey host was horror-stricken when they saw the monster, who was frightful by nature and looked more so in the absence of his nose and ears. (1—5)

दो०—जय जय जय रघुबंस मनि धाए कपि दै हूह।
एकहि बार तासु पर छाड़ेन्हि गिरि तरु जूह ॥ ६६ ॥

Raising a shout of "Glory, glory, all glory to the Jewel of Raghu's race!" the monkeys rushed forward and rained upon him all at once a volley of rocks and trees. (66)

चौ०—कुंभकरन रन रंग बिरुद्धा। सन्मुख चला काल जनु क्रुद्धा ॥
कोटि कोटि कपि धरि धरि खाई। जनु टीड़ी गिरि गुहाँ समाई ॥ १ ॥
कोटिन्ह गहि सरीर सन मर्दा। कोटिन्ह मीजि मिलव महि गर्दा ॥
मुख नासा श्रवनन्हि कीं बाटा। निसरि पराहिं भालु कपि ठाटा ॥ २ ॥
रन मद मत्त निसाचर दर्पा। बिस्व ग्रसिहि जनु एहि बिधि अर्पा ॥
मुरे सुभट सब फिरहिं न फेरे। सूझ न नयन सुनहिं नहिं टेरे ॥ ३ ॥
कुंभकरन कपि फौज बिडारी। सुनि धाई रजनीचर धारी ॥
देखी राम बिकल कटकाई। रिपु अनीक नाना बिधि आई ॥ ४ ॥

Maddened with the lust of battle, Kumbhakarṇa marched against the enemy like Death himself furious with rage. He seized and devoured myriads of monkeys, that looked like swarms of locusts entering a mountain cave. Seizing many more millions he crushed them against his body, and millions he levigated between his palms and mixed with the dust on the ground. Multitudes of bears and monkeys escaped through his mouth, nostrils and ears and ran away. Intoxicated with the frenzy of battle the demon stood in a challenging mood, as though the Creator had placed the whole universe at his disposal and he was going to devour it. All great warriors scuttled away from the battle-field and would not return under any persuasion whatsoever. They could neither see with their eyes nor hear any call. The demon host also sallied forth when they learnt that Kumbhakarṇa had dispersed the monkey army. Śrī Rāma saw the discomfiture of His forces and further perceived all kinds of enemy reinforcements pouring in. (1—4)

दो०—सुनु सुग्रीव बिभीषन अनुज सँभारेहु सैन।
मैं देखउँ खल बल दलहि बोले राजिवनैन ॥ ६७ ॥

"Listen, Sugrīva, Vibhīṣaṇa and Lakṣmaṇa; take care of the army while I test the might and man-power of this wretch," said the lotus-eyed Lord. (67)

चौ०—कर सारंग साजि कटि भाथा। अरि दल दलन चले रघुनाथा॥
प्रथम कीन्हि प्रभु धनुष टँकोरा। रिपु दल बधिर भयउ सुनि सोरा॥ १॥
सत्यसंध छाँड़े सर लच्छा। कालसर्प जनु चले सपच्छा॥
जहँ तहँ चले बिपुल नाराचा। लगे कटन भट बिकट पिसाचा॥ २॥
कटहिं चरन उर सिर भुजदंडा। बहुतक बीर होहिं सत खंडा॥
घुर्मि घुर्मि घायल महि परहीं। उठि संभारि सुभट पुनि लरहीं॥ ३॥
लागत बान जलद जिमि गाजहिं। बहुतक देखि कठिन सर भाजहिं॥
रुंड प्रचंड मुंड बिनु धावहिं। धरु धरु मारु मारु धुनि गावहिं॥ ४॥

Taking His famous bow, known by the name of Śārṅga, in His hand and with a quiver fastened to His waist, the Lord of the Raghus went forth to crush the enemy's ranks. The Lord first twanged His bow: the sound was so piercing that the enemy host was deafened to hear it. Śrī Rāma of unfailing resolve discharged a hundred thousand arrows, which sped like winged cobras. Numerous arrows flew in every direction; fierce demon warriors began to be mowed down. Feet, chest, heads and arms were dismembered; while many a hero was cut into a hundred pieces. Whirling round and round, the wounded fell to the ground; the champions among them rose and, recovering themselves, would join battle again. They thundered like clouds even as the arrows struck them; while many of them took to flight at the very sight of the terrible arrows. Headless trunks rushed fiercely on with the cries of "Seize, seize, kill, kill." (1–4)

दो०—छन महुँ प्रभु के सायकन्हि काटे बिकट पिसाच।
पुनि रघुबीर निषंग महुँ प्रबिसे सब नाराच॥ ६८॥

In a trice the Lord's arrows mowed down the terrible demon host. All the arrows then made their way back into Śrī Rāma's quiver. (68)

चौ०—कुंभकरन मन दीख बिचारी। हति छन माझ निसाचर धारी॥
भा अति क्रुद्ध महाबल बीरा। कियो मृगनायक नाद गँभीरा॥ १॥
कोपि महीधर लेइ उपारी। डारइ जहँ मर्कट भट भारी॥
आवत देखि सैल प्रभु भारे। सरन्हि काटि रज सम करि डारे॥ २॥
पुनि धनु तानि कोपि रघुनायक। छाँड़े अति कराल बहु सायक॥
तनु महुँ प्रबिसि निसरि सर जाहीं। जिमि दामिनि घन माझ समाहीं॥ ३॥
सोनित स्रवत सोह तन कारे। जनु कज्जल गिरि गेरु पनारे॥
बिकल बिलोकि भालु कपि धाए। बिहँसा जबहिं निकट कपि आए॥ ४॥

When Kumbhakarṇa perceived and realized that the demon army had been wiped out in an instant, the formidable hero flew into a violent rage and gave a grim roar as that of a lion (the king of beasts). In his fury he tore

up mountains by the roots and dashed them upon detachments of mighty monkey warriors. The Lord saw the huge mountains coming and shattered them with His arrows into dust as it were. The Lord of the Raghus once more pulled the string of His bow and indignantly discharged a volley of His exceedingly terrible shafts. The arrows entered and passed through his body like flashes of lightning disappearing into a cloud. Blood gushing out from his dark figure resembled spouts of red ochre shooting from a mountain of soot. Perceiving him in fluster, bears and monkeys dashed forward; the monster, however, laughed when the monkeys drew near. (1–4)

दो०—महानाद करि गर्जा कोटि कोटि गहि कीस ।
महि पटकइ गजराज इव सपथ करइ दससीस ॥ ६९ ॥

He burst into a terrible roar and, seizing millions and millions of monkeys, dashed them to the ground like a huge elephant, swearing by his ten-headed brother the while. (69)

चौ०—भागे भालु बलीमुख जूथा । बृकु बिलोकि जिमि मेष बरूथा ॥
चले भागि कपि भालु भवानी । बिकल पुकारत आरत बानी ॥ १ ॥
यह निसिचर दुकाल सम अहई । कपिकुल देस परन अब चहई ॥
कृपा बारिधर राम खरारी । पाहि पाहि प्रनतारति हारी ॥ २ ॥
सकरुन बचन सुनत भगवाना । चले सुधारि सरासन बाना ॥
राम सेन निज पाछें घाली । चले सकोप महा बलसाली ॥ ३ ॥
खैंचि धनुष सर सत संधाने । छूटे तीर सरीर समाने ॥
लागत सर धावा रिस भरा । कुधर डगमगत डोलति धरा ॥ ४ ॥
लीन्ह एक तेहिं सैल उपाटी । रघुकुलतिलक भुजा सोइ काटी ॥
धावा बाम बाहु गिरि धारी । प्रभु सोउ भुजा काटि महि पारी ॥ ५ ॥
काटें भुजा सोह खल कैसा । पच्छहीन मंदर गिरि जैसा ॥
उग्र बिलोकनि प्रभुहि बिलोका । ग्रसन चहत मानहुँ त्रैलोका ॥ ६ ॥

Hosts of bears and monkeys fled like flocks of sheep at the sight of a wolf. The monkeys and bears, O Bhavānī, turned tail in terror, crying in a piteous voice : "Yonder demon is like unto a famine, which threatens to visit this land in the shape of the monkey host. Therefore, O Rāma, Slayer of Khara, the cloud laden with the water of compassion, reliever of the suppliants' agony, save us, protect us." The moment the Lord heard the pathetic words He advanced to meet him, putting His bow and arrows in order. Placing His army in the rear the most powerful Rāma marched ahead, full of indignation. Pulling the string of His bow, He fitted a hundred arrows to it; they flew and disappeared into the demon's body Even as the arrows struck him the demon rushed forth burning with rage; the mountains staggered and the earth shook as he ran. He tore up a rock; but the Glory of Raghu's race cut off the arm that bore it. He then rushed forward with the rock in his left hand; but the Lord struck off even that arm to the ground. Thus shorn of his arms, the wretched resembled Mount Mandara without its wings. He cast a fierce look on the Lord as if ready to devour all the three spheres. (1–6)

दो०—करि चिक्कार घोर अति धावा बदनु पसारि ।
गगन सिद्ध सुर त्रासित हा हा हेति पुकारि ॥ ७० ॥

With a most terrible yell he rushed forth with his mouth wide open. The Siddhas and gods in the heavens shouted in great alarm "Ah, alas, dear me !" (70)

चौ०—सभय देव करुनानिधि जान्यो । श्रवन प्रजंत सरासनु तान्यो ॥
बिसिख निकर निसिचर मुख भरेऊ । तदपि महाबल भूमि न परेऊ ॥ १ ॥
सरन्हि भरा मुख सन्मुख धावा । काल त्रोन सजीव जनु आवा ॥
तब प्रभु कोपि तीब्र सर लीन्हा । धर ते भिन्न तासु सिर कीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
सो सिर परेउ दसानन आगें । बिकल भयउ जिमि फनि मनि त्यागें ॥
धरनि धसइ धर धाव प्रचंडा । तब प्रभु काटि कीन्ह दुइ खंडा ॥ ३ ॥
परे भूमि जिमि नभ तें भूधर । हेठ दाबि कपि भालु निसाचर ॥
तासु तेज प्रभु बदन समाना । सुर मुनि सबहिं अचंभव माना ॥ ४ ॥
सुर दुंदुभीं बजावहिं हरषहिं । अस्तुति करहिं सुमन बहु बरषहिं ॥
करि बिनती सुर सकल सिधाए । तेही समय देवरिषि आए ॥ ५ ॥
गगनोपरि हरि गुन गन गाए । रुचिर बीररस प्रभु मन भाए ॥
बेगि हतहु खल कहि मुनि गए । राम समर महि सोभत भए ॥ ६ ॥

Perceiving the gods much alarmed, the All-merciful pulled the string of His bow right up to His ear and blocked the demon's mouth with a flight of His arrows; yet he did not fall to the ground, most powerful as he was. With his mouth full of arrows he rushed forward like a living quiver of Death Himself. Then the Lord in His wrath took a sharp arrow and struck his head right off his body. The head dropped in front of his ten-headed brother, who was filled with agony at its sight like a snake that has lost its crest-jewel. The earth sunk beneath the weight of the terrible trunk that still sprinted there; thereupon the Lord cut it in two. The two pieces fell to the ground like a pair of mountains dropped from the heavens, crushing beneath them monkeys, bears and demons alike. His soul entered the Lord's mouth in the form of a mass of light, to the astonishment of gods, sages and all. The gods sounded their kettle-drums in great exultation, extolled the Lord and rained down flowers in profusion. Having prayed to the Lord, all the gods went their way. Just at that moment arrived the celestial sage, Nārada. Standing high in the air he sang Śrī Hari's praises in a delightful heroic strain, which pleased the Lord's soul. The sage departed with the words "Pray, despatch this wretch (Rāvaṇa) quickly." Śrī Rāma shone forth on the field of battle.

(1—6)

छं०—संग्राम भूमि बिराज रघुपति अतुल बल कोसल धनी ।
श्रम बिंदु मुख राजीव लोचन अरुन तन सोनित कनी ॥
भुज जुगल फेरत सर सरासन भालु कपि चहु दिसि बने ।
कह दास तुलसी कहि न सक छबि सेष जेहि आनन घने ॥

The Lord of the Raghus, the King of Kosala, who was matchless in strength, shone resplendent on the field of battle in the midst of bears and monkeys, with drops of perspiration on His face, His lotus eyes turned red and His person specked with particles of blood, and both His hands busy playing with His bow and arrow. Even Śeṣa (the serpent-god), says Tulasīdāsa, could not describe the Lord's beauty despite his numerous tongues.

दो०—निसिचर अधम मलाकर ताहि दीन्ह निज धाम ।
गिरिजा ते नर मंदमति जे न भजहिं श्रीराम ॥ ७१ ॥

Śrī Rāma vouchsafed a place in His own abode to a vile demon, who was a mine of impurities ! Girijā, (continues Lord Śiva,) dull-witted are those men who adore Him not. (71)

चौ०—दिन कें अंत फिरीं द्वौ अनी । समर भई सुभटन्ह श्रम घनी ॥
राम कृपाँ कपि दल बल बाढ़ा । जिमि तृन पाइ लाग अति डाढ़ा ॥ १ ॥
छीजहिं निसिचर दिनु अरु राती । निज मुख कहें सुकृत जेहि भाँती ॥
बहु बिलाप दसकंधर करई । बंधु सीस पुनि पुनि उर धरई ॥ २ ॥
रोवहिं नारि हृदय हति पानी । तासु तेज बल बिपुल बखानी ॥
मेघनाद तेहि अवसर आयउ । कहि बहु कथा पिता समुझायउ ॥ ३ ॥
देखेहु कालि मोरि मनुसाई । अबहिं बहुत का करौं बड़ाई ॥
इष्टदेव सैं बल रथ पायउँ । सो बल तात न तोहि देखायउँ ॥ ४ ॥
एहि बिधि जल्पत भयउ बिहाना । चहुँ दुआर लागे कपि नाना ॥
इत कपि भालु काल सम बीरा । उत रजनीचर अति रनधीरा ॥ ५ ॥
लरहिं सुभट निज निज जय हेतू । बरनि न जाइ समर खगकेतू ॥ ६ ॥

At the close of the day the two contending armies retired from the battle-field. The battle had proved exceedingly strenuous even to the stoutest warrior. But the monkey host waxed stronger by Śrī Rāma's grace, even as fire blazes up when fed with straw. The ranks of the demons were thinning night and day like merit, which is exhausted by speaking of one's good deeds with one's own lips. The ten-headed monster made much lamentation, clasping his brother's head to his bosom again and again. The women wept and beat their breast with their hands, paying tributes to his extraordinary majesty and strength. At that juncture Meghanāda (Rāvaṇa's eldest son) came and consoled his father by narrating a number of (reassuring) stories. "See my heroism tomorrow; I need not make any pretentious statement just now. I have had no occasion to show you, dear father, the strength which I acquired along with the chariot from my beloved deity." While he rattled on in this manner the day broke and swarms of monkeys besieged all the four gates. On this side ranged the monkey and bear warriors terrible as death, while on the other side stood the demons exceedingly staunch in battle. Every champion fought for the victory of his own camp; the battle, O Garuḍa (says Kākabhuśuṇḍi), defied all description. (1–6)

दो०—मेघनाद मायामय रथ चढ़ि गयउ अकास ।
गर्जेउ अट्टहास करि भइ कपि कटकहि त्रास ॥ ७२ ॥

Mounting his charmed car Meghanāda ascended into the air and roared with a terrible laugh, which struck the monkey host with terror. (72)

चौ०—सक्ति सूल तरवारि कृपाना । अस्त्र सस्त्र कुलिसायुध नाना ॥
डारइ परसु परिघ पाषाना । लागेउ बृष्टि करै बहु बाना ॥ १ ॥
दस दिसि रहे बान नभ छाई । मानहुँ मघा मेघ झरि लाई ॥
धरु धरु मारु सुनिअ धुनि काना । जो मारइ तेहि कोउ न जाना ॥ २ ॥
गहि गिरि तरु अकास कपि धावहिं । देखहिं तेहि न दुखित फिरि आवहिं ॥
अवघट घाट बाट गिरि कंदर । माया बल कीन्हेसि सर पंजर ॥ ३ ॥
जाहिं कहाँ ब्याकुल भए बंदर । सुरपति बंदि परे जनु मंदर ॥
मारुतसुत अंगद नल नीला । कीन्हेसि बिकल सकल बलसीला ॥ ४ ॥
पुनि लछिमन सुग्रीव बिभीषन । सरन्हि मारि कीन्हेसि जर्जर तन ॥
पुनि रघुपति सैं जूझै लागा । सर छाँड़इ होइ लागहिं नागा ॥ ५ ॥
ब्याल पास बस भए खरारी । स्वबस अनंत एक अबिकारी ॥
नट इव कपट चरित कर नाना । सदा स्वतंत्र एक भगवाना ॥ ६ ॥
रन सोभा लगि प्रभुहिं बँधायो । नागपास देवन्ह भय पायो ॥ ७ ॥

He discharged a volley of lances, pikes, swords and scimitars as well as axes, bludgeons and stones, and other missiles and weapons of every description, terrible as a thunderbolt, and further rained down shafts in profusion. The sky was thickly covered with arrows on all sides, as though the clouds poured in torrents in the month of Bhādrapada, when the constellation Magha (the tenth in order of the twenty-seven Nakṣatras) is in the ascendant. The cries of "Seize, seize, kill, kill" filled every ear; but nobody knew who it was that struck them. Snatching up rocks and trees, the monkeys sprang into the air; but they could not see him and returned sore disappointed. Meanwhile by his delusive power Meghanāda had turned every rugged valley, path and mountain cave into a veritable aviary of arrows. The monkeys were confounded and did not know where to turn. They felt helpless like so many Mandaras thrown into prison as it were by Indra. The son of the wind-god, Angada, Nala, Nīla and all the other mighty heroes were completely discomfited by him. Again he assailed with his shafts Lakṣmaṇa, Sugrīva, and Vibhīṣaṇa and pierced their bodies through and through. Then he confronted the Lord of the Raghus Himself; the arrows he let fly turned into serpents even as they struck Śrī Rāma. The Slayer of Khara, who is all-independent, infinite and immutable, the one without a second, was overpowered by the serpents' coils. Like an actor, He plays many a part,—He, the one, ever-free and omnipotent Lord. It was in order to invest the battle with a glory of its own that the Lord allowed Himself to be bound by a snare of serpents, even though the gods were dismayed at this sight. (1—7)

दो०—गिरिजा जासु नाम जपि मुनि काटहिं भव पास ।
सो कि बंध तर आवइ ब्यापक बिस्व निवास ॥ ७२ ॥

Girijā, (continues Lord Śiva,) is it ever possible that the Lord, who is the all-pervading abode of the universe and whose name, when repeated enables the hermits to cut asunder the bonds of existence, should fall in bondage ? (73)

चौ०—चरित राम के सगुन भवानी । तर्कि न जाहिं बुद्धि बल बानी ॥
अस बिचारि जे तग्य बिरागी । रामहि भजहिं तर्क सब त्यागी ॥ १ ॥
ब्याकुल कटंकु कीन्ह घननादा । पुनि भा प्रगट कहइ दुर्बादा ॥
जामवंत कह खल रहु ठाढ़ा । सुनि करि ताहि क्रोध अति बाढ़ा ॥ २ ॥
बूढ़ जानि सठ छाँड़ेउँ तोही । लागेसि अधम पचारै मोही ॥
अस कहि तरल त्रिसूल चलायो । जामवंत कर गहि सोइ धायो ॥ ३ ॥
मारिसि मेघनाद कै छाती । परा भूमि घुर्मित सुरघाती ॥
पुनि रिसान गहि चरन फिरायो । महि पछारि निज बल देखरायो ॥ ४ ॥
बर प्रसाद सो मरइ न मारा । तब गहि पद लंका पर डारा ॥
इहाँ देवरिषि गरुड़ पठायो । राम समीप सपदि सो आयो ॥ ५ ॥

The doings of Śrī Rāma when appearing in an embodied form, Bhavānī, cannot be logically interpreted by the power of reason or speech. Realizing this those who know the truth about Him and are full of dispassion adore Śrī Rāma, discarding all theological speculation. Having thus thrown the monkey host into confusion, Ghananāda (a synonym for Meghanāda) at last revealed himself and began to pour abuses. Jāmbavān said, "Remain standing a while, O wretch !" When he heard this, his anger knew no bound. "Fool, I spared you only on account of your age. And yet you have had the audacity to challenge me, O vile creature !" So saying he hurled his glittering trident. Jāmbavān, however, caught it in his hand and, darting forward, struck Meghanāda in the chest with it so vehemently that the enemy of gods reeled and fell to the ground. Once again Jāmbavān in his fury took Meghanāda by the foot and, swinging him round, dashed him against the ground and thus showed him his strength. By virtue of the boon* (granted to him by the Creator), however, he died not for all his killing. Thereupon Jambavān seized him by the foot and tossed him into Lankā. At this end the celestial sage Nārada despatched Garuḍa, who took no time in reaching by the side of Śrī Rāma. (1—5)

* In the *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa* Vibhiṣaṇa tells Śrī Rāma:—

यस्तु द्वादश वर्षाणि निद्राहारविवर्जितः ॥
तेनैव मृत्युर्निर्दिष्टो ब्रह्मणास्य दुरात्मनः । लक्ष्मणस्तु ह्ययोध्याया निर्गम्यायात् त्वया सह ॥
तदादि निद्राहारादीन्न जानाति रघूत्तम । सेवार्थं तव राजेन्द्र ज्ञातं सर्वमिदं मया ॥
तदाज्ञापय देवेश लक्ष्मणं त्वरया मया । हनिष्यति न संदेहः शेषः साक्षाद्धराधरः ॥

(*Yuddhakāṇḍa*)

"Brahmā (the Creator) has ordained the death of this wicked soul (Meghanāda) at the hands of one who has neither slept nor taken any food for full twelve years. Given over to your service, Lakṣmaṇa, O Chief of the Raghus, has known neither sleep nor food etc. ever since he came away from Ayodhyā: I have come to know all this, O King of kings. Therefore, O Ruler of gods, command Lakṣmaṇa to accompany me with all speed; for he is no other than Śeṣa, the supporter of the earth, and will doubtless slay this demon.

दो०—खगपति सब धरि खाए माया नाग बरूथ ।
माया बिगत भए सब हरषे बानर जूथ ॥ ७४ (क) ॥
गहि गिरि पादप उपल नख धाए कीस रिसाइ ।
चले तमीचर बिकलतर गढ़ पर चढ़े पराइ ॥ ७४ (ख) ॥

The king of birds seized and devoured the whole swarm of snakes created by Meghanāda's demoniac power. The charm was thus dispelled and all the divisions of the monkey host rejoiced again. Armed with rocks, trees, stones and claws, the monkeys rushed forth in their fury; while the demons took to their heels in utter confusion and climbed up the fort. (74 A-B)

चौ०—मेघनाद कै मुरछा जागी । पितहि बिलोकि लाज अति लागी ॥
तुरत गयउ गिरिबर कंदरा । करौं अजय मख अस मन धरा ॥ १ ॥
इहाँ बिभीषन मंत्र बिचारा । सुनहु नाथ बल अतुल उदारा ॥
मेघनाद मख करइ अपावन । खल मायावी देव सतावन ॥ २ ॥
जौं प्रभु सिद्ध होइ सो पाइहि । नाथ बेगि पुनि जीति न जाइहि ॥
सुनि रघुपति अतिसय सुख माना । बोले अंगदादि कपि नाना ॥ ३ ॥
लछिमन संग जाहु सब भाई । करहु बिधंस जग्य कर जाई ॥
तुम्ह लछिमन मारेहु रन ओही । देखि सभय सुर दुख अति मोही ॥ ४ ॥
मारेहु तेहि बल बुद्धि उपाई । जेहिं छीजै निसिचर सुनु भाई ॥
जामवंत सुग्रीव बिभीषन । सेन समेत रहेहु तीनिउ जन ॥ ५ ॥
जब रघुबीर दीन्हि अनुसासन । कटि निषंग कसि साजि सरासन ॥
प्रभु प्रताप उर धरि रनधीरा । बोले घन इव गिरा गँभीरा ॥ ६ ॥
जौं तेहि आजु बधें बिनु आवौं । तौ रघुपति सेवक न कहावौं ॥
जौं सत संकर करहिं सहाई । तदपि हतउँ रघुबीर दोहाई ॥ ७ ॥

When Meghanāda recovered from his swoon, he felt much ashamed to find his father before him. He speedily betook himself to a convenient mountain cave and resolved to perform a sacrifice which would render him invincible. At this end Vibhīṣaṇa approached the Lord and told Him his considered view. "Listen, my lord of incomparable might and generosity: the wicked Meghanāda, who is a past master in creating illusions and the scourge of heaven, is performing an unholy sacrifice. If, my lord, the sacrifice is allowed to be completed, he will not then be speedily conquered." The Lord of the Raghus was highly gratified to hear this and summoned Angada and many other monkeys. "Go with Lakṣmaṇa, brethren all, and wreck the sacrifice. And it is for you, Lakṣmaṇa, to kill him in battle. I am much distressed to find the gods in terror. You must finish him by force of your wit might or one way or other, mark me, brother, the demon must be put an end to. And Jāmbavān, Sugrīva and Vibhīṣaṇa, you three must keep by his side with your regiment." When the Hero of Raghu's line had finished His command, Lakṣmaṇa, who was staunch in battle, girt the quiver by his side and strung his bow; and cherishing the Lord's glory in his heart,

he spoke in a voice deep as thunder, "If I return today without slaying him (Meghanāda), let me no longer be called a servant of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). Nay, even if a hundred Śivas come to his help, I shall nonetheless kill him in the name of Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line)." (1—7)

दो०—रघुपति चरन नाइ सिरु चलेउ तुरंत अनंत ।
अंगद नील मयंद नल संग सुभट हनुमंत ॥ ७५ ॥

Bowing his head at the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), Lakṣmaṇa (who was none else than Lord Ananta or Śeṣa) set out at once, accompanied by champions like Angada, Nīla, Mainda, Nala and Hanumān. (75)

चौ०—जाइ कपिन्ह सो देखा बैसा । आहुति देत रुधिर अरु भैंसा ॥
कीन्ह कपिन्ह सब जग्य बिधंसा । जब न उठइ तब करहिं प्रसंसा ॥ १ ॥
तदपि न उठइ धरेन्हि कच जाई । लातन्हि हति हति चले पराई ॥
लै त्रिसूल धावा कपि भागे । आए जहँ रामानुज आगे ॥ २ ॥
आवा परम क्रोध कर मारा । गर्ज घोर रव बारहिं बारा ॥
कोपि मरुतसुत अंगद धाए । हति त्रिसूल उर धरनि गिराए ॥ ३ ॥
प्रभु कहँ छाँड़ेसि सूल प्रचंडा । सर हति कृत अनंत जुग खंडा ॥
उठि बहोरि मारुति जुबराजा । हतहिं कोपि तेहि घाउ न बाजा ॥ ४ ॥
फिरे बीर रिपु मरइ न मारा । तब धावा करि घोर चिकारा ॥
आवत देखि क्रुद्ध जनु काला । लछिमन छाड़े बिसिख कराला ॥ ५ ॥
देखेसि आवत पबि सम बाना । तुरत भयउ खल अंतरधाना ॥
बिबिध बेष धरि करइ लराई । कबहुँक प्रगट कबहुँ दुरि जाई ॥ ६ ॥
देखि अजय रिपु डरपे कीसा । परम क्रुद्ध तब भयउ अहीसा ॥
लछिमन मन अस मंत्र दृढ़ावा । एहि पापिहि मैं बहुत खेलावा ॥ ७ ॥
सुमिरि कोसलाधीस प्रतापा । सर संधान कीन्ह करि दापा ॥
छाड़ा बान माझ उर लागा । मरती बार कपटु सब त्यागा ॥ ८ ॥

Arriving there, the monkeys found him squatting and offering oblations of blood and live buffaloes to the sacrificial fire. The monkeys wrecked the whole sacrifice; yet, when the demon refused to stir, they proceeded to applaud him (ironically). Even then he did not quit his place; the monkeys thereupon went and caught him by the hair and, striking him with the foot one after the other, ran away. He rushed forth, trident in hand, while the monkeys fled before him and came where Śrī Rāma's younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) stood at the head of his army. Driven by the wildest fury he came and shouted with a terrible roar again and again. The son of the wind-god and Angada darted forward in great indignation: but he struck them on the breast with his trident and felled them to the ground. He then hurled his fierce trident at the Lord (Lakṣmaṇa); but Ananta intercepted it with his arrow and broke it in two. Meanwhile the son of the wind-god and Prince Angada had risen again and struck him furiously; but he received no injury. When the heroes turned round thinking that the enemy could not be killed in spite of

the best efforts, he rushed forth with a terrible yell. When Lakṣmaṇa saw him coming furiously like Death himself, he let fly fierce arrows. The wretch, however, vanished out of sight the moment he saw arrows terrible as thunderbolt darting towards him. He fought in various guises, now revealing himself and now disappearing. The monkeys were filled with dismay when they saw that the enemy could not be conquered. Lakṣmaṇa (the lord of serpents) thereupon flew into a towering rage. He made a firm resolve in his mind to dispose of the demon; for he thought, "I have played with this wretch long enough." Recalling the might of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Kosala), he defiantly fitted an arrow to his bow and shot it with such steady aim that it struck Meghanāda full in the breast and the demon abandoned all false appearances at the moment of death. (1—8)

दो०—रामानुज कहँ रामु कहँ अस कहि छाँड़ेसि प्रान ।
धन्य धन्य तव जननी कह अंगद हनुमान ॥ ७६ ॥

He gave up his ghost with the words "Where is Rāma's younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) ?" "Where is Rāma ?" on his lips. "Blessed indeed is your mother !" exclaimed Angada and Hanumān. (76)

चौ०—बिनु प्रयास हनुमान उठायो । लंका द्वार राखि पुनि आयो ॥
तासु मरन सुनि सुर गंधर्बा । चढ़ि बिमान आए नभ सर्बा ॥ १ ॥
बरषि सुमन दुंदुभीं बजावहिं । श्रीरघुनाथ बिमल जसु गावहिं ॥
जय अनंत जय जगदाधारा । तुम्ह प्रभु सब देवन्हि निस्तारा ॥ २ ॥
अस्तुति करि सुर सिद्ध सिधाए । लछिमन कृपासिंधु पहिं आए ॥
सुत बध सुना दसानन जबहीं । मुरुछित भयउ परेउ महि तबहीं ॥ ३ ॥
मंदोदरी रुदन कर भारी । उर ताड़न बहु भाँति पुकारी ॥
नगर लोग सब ब्याकुल सोचा । सकल कहहिं दसकंधर पोचा ॥ ४ ॥

Hanumān lifted him without any exertion and after placing him at the main gate of Lankā returned. Hearing of his death, the gods as well as the Gandharvas all appeared in the heavens in their aerial cars. Raining down flowers, they beat their drums and sang the spotless glory of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). "Glory to Lord Ananta ! Glory to the support of the whole universe ! You, O lord, have delivered the gods." Having thus hymned his praises, the gods as well as the Siddhas went their way; while Lakṣmaṇa arrived in the presence of the All-merciful. The moment the ten-headed monster heard the news of his son's death, he dropped senseless to the ground. Mandodarī made grievous lamentation, beating her breast and crying in many ways. The citizens were all smitten with grief; everyone abused Rāvaṇa. (1—4)

दो०—तब दसकंठ बिबिधि बिधि समुझाईं सब नारि ।
नस्वर रूप जगत सब देखहु हृदयँ बिचारि ॥ ७७ ॥

The ten-headed monster then consoled all the womenfolk in various ways "Perceive and realize in your heart," he said, "that the entire universe is perishable." (77)

चौ०—तिन्हहि ग्यान उपदेसा रावन। आपुन मंद कथा सुभ पावन॥
पर उपदेस कुसल बहुतेरे। जे आचरहिं ते नर न घनेरे॥ १॥
निसा सिरानि भयउ भिनुसारा। लगे भालु कपि चारिहुँ द्वारा॥
सुभट बोलाइ दसानन बोला। रन सन्मुख जा कर मन डोला॥ २॥
सो अबहीं बरु जाउ पराई। संजुग बिमुख भएँ न भलाई॥
निज भुज बल मैं बयरु बढ़ावा। देहउँ उतरु जो रिपु चढ़ि आवा॥ ३॥
अस कहि मरुत बेग रथ साजा। बाजे सकल जुझाऊ बाजा॥
चले बीर सब अतुलित बली। जनु कज्जल कै आँधी चली॥ ४॥
असगुन अमित होहिं तेहि काला। गनइ न भुजबल गर्ब बिसाला॥ ५॥

Rāvaṇa taught them sound wisdom; though vile himself, his counsel was so pious and wholesome! Indeed there are hosts of people clever in instructing others; but those who practise good morals themselves are few and far between. When the night was over and the day broke, the bears and monkeys invested all the four gates. The ten-headed monster summoned his champions and said, "He whose heart quails before the enemy in battle had better withdraw even now; for if he turns his back on the field of battle, he will have to suffer for it. Relying on the strength of my own arm have I prosecuted the war and shall give befitting reply to the enemy who has invaded us." So saying, he got ready his chariot, swift as the wind, and all the musical instruments of war sounded. The heroes, who were all matchless in strength, rushed forth like a storm of soot. Numberless ill-omens occurred at that time; but, extremely proud of his might of arm, he heeded them not. (1–5)

छं०—अति गर्ब गनइ न सगुन असगुन स्त्रवहिं आयुध हाथ ते।
भट गिरत रथ ते बाजि गज चिक्करत भाजहिं साथ ते॥
गोमाय गीध कराल खर रव स्वान बोलहिं अति घने।
जनु कालदूत उलूक बोलहिं बचन परम भयावने॥

In his overweening pride he took no heed of the omens, whether good or bad. Weapons dropped from his hands and warriors fell down from their cars, while horses and elephants ran shrieking out of the line. Frightful jackals, vultures and donkeys gave a shrill cry while dogs whined in large numbers. And owls, like messengers of death, uttered most alarming notes.

दो०—ताहि कि संपति सगुन सुभ सपनेहुँ मन बिश्राम।
भूत द्रोह रत मोहबस राम बिमुख रति काम॥ ७८॥

Can he ever expect prosperity and good omens and attain peace of mind even in dream, who is actively malevolent to the living creation, is hostile to Śrī Rāma and is steeped in the enjoyment of the senses, all under a spell of delusion? (78)

चौ०—चलेउ निसाचर कटकु अपारा। चतुरंगिनी अनी बहु धारा॥
बिबिधि भाँति बाहन रथ जाना। बिपुल बरन पताक ध्वज नाना॥ १॥

चले मत्त गज जूथ घनेरे । प्राबिट जलद मरुत जनु प्रेरे ॥
बरन बरन बिरदैत निकाया । समर सूर जानहिं बहु माया ॥ २ ॥
अति बिचित्र बाहिनी बिराजी । बीर बसंत सेन जनु साजी ॥
चलत कटक दिगसिंधुर डगहीं । छुभित पयोधि कुधर डगमगहीं ॥ ३ ॥
उठी रेनु रबि गयउ छपाई । मरुत थकित बसुधा अकुलाई ॥
पनव निसान घोर रव बाजहिं । प्रलय समय के घन जनु गाजहिं ॥ ४ ॥
भेरि नफीरि बाज सहनाई । मारू राग सुभट सुखदाई ॥
केहरि नाद बीर सब करहीं । निज निज बल पौरुष उच्चरहीं ॥ ५ ॥
कहइ दसानन सुनहु सुभट्टा । मर्दहु भालु कपिन्ह के ठट्टा ॥
हौं मारिहउँ भूप द्वौ भाई । अस कहि सन्मुख फौज रेंगाई ॥ ६ ॥
यह सुधि सकल कपिन्ह जब पाई । धाए करि रघुबीर दोहाई ॥ ७ ॥

The demon host, which defied all calculation, marched. Complete in all its four limbs, viz., elephants and chariots, horse and foot, it was divided into many regiments and was equipped with mounts, cars and other conveyances of every description as well as with numerous banners and standards of diverse colour. Numberless troops of infuriated elephants marched like rainy clouds driven by the wind. There were multitudes of distinguished warriors wearing uniforms of various colours, all heroic in battle and conversant with many illusive devices. Thus the army was magnificent in every way and looked like the mustered array of the gallant deity presiding over the vernal season. Even as the host marched, the elephants guarding the eight quarters tottered, the ocean was stirred to its very depth and the mountains rocked. The dust rose in clouds that obscured the sun, the air became still and the earth was troubled. Drums and kettle-drums made an awful din like the thundering of clouds at the time of universal destruction. Tabors, clarionettes and hautboys sounded the martial strain that gladdens the heart of champions. All the heroes roared like lions, each extolling his own might and valour. Rāvaṇa exclaimed: "Listen, my valiant warriors: wipe out the hordes of these bears and monkeys, while I shall slay the two brother princes." So saying he ordered his army to march forward. When the monkeys received this news, they all rushed forth invoking the help of Śrī Rāma. (1—7)

छं०—धाए बिसाल कराल मर्कट भालु काल समान ते ।
मानहुँ सपच्छ उड़ाहिं भूधर बृंद नाना बान ते ॥
नख दसन सैल महाद्रुमायुध सबल संक न मानहीं ।
जय राम रावन मत्त गज मृगराज सुजसु बखानहीं ॥

The gigantic monkeys and bears, who were terrible as death, rushed forward like hosts of winged mountains of diverse colour. With claws and teeth, rocks and huge trees for their weapons they were all very powerful and knew no fear. They shouted "Glory to Śrī Rāma, a veritable lion for the wild elephant in the shape of Rāvaṇa" and sang His praises.

दो०—दुहु दिसि जय जयकार करि निज निज जोरी जानि ।
भिरे बीर इत रामहि उत रावनहि बखानि ॥ ७९ ॥

With a shout of "Victory ! Victory !!" on both sides and each finding his own match, the heroes came to a close combat, the monkeys singing the glory of Śrī Rāma and the demons extolling Rāvaṇa. (79)

चौ०—रावनु रथी बिरथ रघुबीरा । देखि बिभीषन भयउ अधीरा ॥
अधिक प्रीति मन भा संदेहा । बंदि चरन कह सहित सनेहा ॥ १ ॥
नाथ न रथ नहिं तन पद त्राना । केहि बिधि जितब बीर बलवाना ॥
सुनहु सखा कह कृपानिधाना । जेहिं जय होइ सो स्यंदन आना ॥ २ ॥
सौरज धीरज तेहि रथ चाका । सत्य सील दृढ़ ध्वजा पताका ॥
बल बिबेक दम परहित घोरे । छमा कृपा समता रजु जोरे ॥ ३ ॥
ईस भजनु सारथी सुजाना । बिरति चर्म संतोष कृपाना ॥
दान परसु बुधि सक्ति प्रचंडा । बर बिग्यान कठिन कोदंडा ॥ ४ ॥
अमल अचल मन त्रोन समाना । सम जम नियम सिलीमुख नाना ॥
कवच अभेद बिप्र गुर पूजा । एहि सम बिजय उपाय न दूजा ॥ ५ ॥
सखा धर्ममय अस रथ जाकें । जीतन कहँ न कतहुँ रिपु ताकें ॥ ६ ॥

Vibhīṣaṇa was disconcerted when he saw Rāvaṇa mounted on a chariot and the Hero of Raghu's line without any. His great fondness for the Lord filled his mind with diffidence; and bowing to His feet he spoke with a tender heart: "My lord, You have no chariot nor any protection either for Your body (in the shape of armour) or for Your feet (in the shape of shoes). How, then, can You expect to conquer this mighty hero?" "Listen, friend:" replied the All-merciful, "the chariot which leads one to victory is quite another. Valour and fortitude are the wheels of that chariot, while truthfulness and good conduct are its enduring banner and standard. Even so strength, discretion, self-control and benevolence are its four horses, that have been joined to the chariot with the cords of forgiveness, compassion and evenness of mind. Adoration of God is the expert driver; dispassion, the shield and contentment, the sword. Again, charity is the axe; reason, the fierce lance and the highest wisdom, the relentless bow. A pure and steady mind is like a quiver; while quietude and the various forms of abstinence (Yamas) and religious observances (Niyamas) are a sheaf of arrows. Homage to the Brahmans and to one's own preceptor is an impenetrable coat of mail; there is no other equipment for victory as efficacious as this. My friend, he who owns such a chariot of piety shall have no enemy to conquer anywhere. (1–6)

दो०—महा अजय संसार रिपु जीति सकइ सो बीर ।
जाकें अस रथ होइ दृढ़ सुनहु सखा मतिधीर ॥ ८० (क) ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन बिभीषन हरषि गहे पद कंज ।
एहि मिस मोहि उपदेसेहु राम कृपा सुख पुंज ॥ ८० (ख) ॥

उत पचार दसकंधर इत अंगद हनुमान ।
लरत निसाचर भालु कपि करि निज निज प्रभु आन ॥ ८० (ग) ॥

"Listen, O friend of resolute mind: the hero who happens to be in possession of such a strong chariot can conquer even that mighty and invincible foe, attachment to the world." Hearing the Lord's words, Vibhīṣaṇa clasped His lotus feet in joy. "You have utilized this opportunity to exhort me, O Rāma, an embodiment of grace and bliss that You are." On that side the ten-headed Rāvana threw his challenge, while on this side Angada and Hanumān invited him to a contest. The demons, on the one hand, and the bears and monkeys, on the other, steadily fought, each side swearing by its lord. (80 A—C)

चौ०—सुर ब्रह्मादि सिद्ध मुनि नाना । देखत रन नभ चढ़े बिमाना ॥
हमहू उमा रहे तेहिं संगा । देखत राम चरित रन रंगा ॥ १ ॥
सुभट समर रस दुहु दिसि माते । कपि जयसील राम बल ताते ॥
एक एक सन भिरहिं पचारहिं । एकन्ह एक मर्दि महि पारहिं ॥ २ ॥
मारहिं काटहिं धरहिं पछारहिं । सीस तोरि सीसन्ह सन मारहिं ॥
उदर बिदारहिं भुजा उपारहिं । गहि पद अवनि पटकि भट डारहिं ॥ ३ ॥
निसिचर भट महि गाड़हिं भालू । ऊपर ढारि देहिं बहु बालू ॥
बीर बलीमुख जुद्ध बिरुद्धे । देखिअत बिपुल काल जनु क्रुद्धे ॥ ४ ॥

Brahmā and the other gods, as well as a number of Siddhas and sages mounted their aerial cars and watched the contest from the heavens. I too, Uma, (continues Lord Śiva,) happened to be in that company and witnessed Śrī Rāma's exploits replete with martial zeal. The champions of both sides were maddened with a passion for war; the monkeys, however, led the field through the might of Śrī Rama. With shouts of defiance they closed in single combat, each crushing his adversary and throwing him to the ground. They smote the enemy, hacked him to pieces clutched him and dashed him to the ground; nay, they tore, his head off and pelted another with the same. They ripped up bellies, plucked up arms and, seizing the opponent by the foot, dashed him to the ground. The bears buried the demon warriors underground and piled over them large heaps of sand. The gallant monkeys on the battle-field looked like so many infuriated forms of Death as they desperately fought against the enemy.

(1—4)

छं०—क्रुद्धे कृतांत समान कपि तन स्रवत सोनित राजहीं ।
मर्दहिं निसाचर कटक भट बलवंत घन जिमि गाजहीं ॥
मारहिं चपेटन्हि डाटि दातन्ह काटि लातन्ह मीजहीं ।
चिक्करहिं मर्कट भालु छल बल करहिं जेहिं खल छीजहीं ॥
धरि गाल फारहिं उर बिदारहिं गल अँतावरि मेलहीं ।
प्रह्लादपति जनु बिबिध तनु धरि समर अंगन खेलहीं ॥

धरु मारु काटु पछारु घोर गिरा गगन महि भरि रही।
जय राम जो तृन ते कुलिस कर कुलिस ते कर तृन सही ॥ २॥

Their bodies streaming with blood, the powerful monkey warriors looked like the god of death in fury. Crushing the champions of the demon host they roared like thunder-clouds. They slapped and browbeat their opponents, bit them and trampled them under foot. The monkeys and bears sent out a shrill cry and employed every stratagem to annihilate the miscreant host. They seized and tore open the cheeks, ripped up the bellies and hung the entrails round their necks, as though the lord of Prahlāda (Bhagavān Nṛsiṃha) had assumed a multiplicity of forms and sported on the field of death. The savage cries of "Seize, smite, cut to pieces and knock down!" filled both heaven and earth. Glory to Śrī Rāma, who can actually convert a blade of grass into a thunderbolt and *vice versa*. (1—2)

दो०—निज दल बिचलत देखेसि बीस भुजाँ दस चाप।
रथ चढ़ि चलेउ दसानन फिरहु फिरहु करि दाप ॥ ८१ ॥

When the ten-headed Rāvaṇa saw his troops breaking, he mounted his chariot and drawing ten bows in his twenty arms turned round, shouting in great fury "Turn back, turn back." (81)

चौ०—धायउ परम क्रुद्ध दसकंधर। सन्मुख चले हूह दै बंदर ॥
गहि कर पादप उपल पहारा। डारेन्हि ता पर एकहिं बारा ॥ १ ॥
लागहिं सैल बज्र तन तासू। खंड खंड होइ फूटहिं आसू ॥
चला न अचल रहा रथ रोपी। रन दुर्मद रावन अति कोपी ॥ २ ॥
इत उत झपटि दपटि कपि जोधा। मर्दै लाग भयउ अति क्रोधा ॥
चले पराइ भालु कपि नाना। त्राहि त्राहि अंगद हनुमाना ॥ ३ ॥
पाहि पाहि रघुबीर गोसाईं। यह खल खाइ काल की नाईं ॥
तेहिं देखे कपि सकल पराने। दसहुँ चाप सायक संधाने ॥ ४ ॥

The wrath of the ten-headed monster knew no bounds as he darted forward. But the monkeys also hurried to confront him shouting with glee. Taking in their hands trees, stones and rocks, they hurled them upon him all at once. The rocks broke to pieces the moment they struck his adamantine frame Ravaṇa, who was maddened with the lust for war and most furious by temperament, flinched not but remained firm as a rock, planting his chariot where it stood. Burning all over with rage he darted and bullied hither and thither and started crushing the monkey warriors. Many a bear and monkey took to his heel, crying: "Help, help, Angada and Hanumān! Save, save, O Lord Raghuvīra (Hero of Raghu's line)! This wretch is devouring us like Death." When the monster saw that all the monkeys had fled, he fitted an arrow to each of his ten bows. (1—4)

छं०—संधानि धनु सर निकर छाड़ेसि उरग जिमि उड़ि लागहीं।
रहे पूरि सर धरनी गगन दिसि बिदिसि कहँ कपि भागहीं ॥

भयो अति कोलाहल बिकल कपि दल भालु बोलहिं आतुरे ।
रघुबीर करुना सिंधु आरत बंधु जन रच्छक हरे ॥

Fitting an arrow to each of his bows, he shot a volley of arrows, which flew and lodged like winged serpents. The shafts filled all available space on earth as well as in the heavens including the eight quarters, so that the monkeys knew not where to go. There was a wild uproar in the ranks of the monkeys and bears, who were all sore distressed and cried in anguish : "O Hero of Raghu's line, O Ocean of mercy, O Befriender of the distressed, O Hari, O Saviour of mankind !"

दो०—निज दल बिकल देखि कटि कसि निषंग धनु हाथ ।
लछिमन चले क्रुद्ध होइ नाइ राम पद माथ ॥ ८२ ॥

Seeing the distress of his troops Lakṣmaṇa fastened the quiver to his waist; and taking the bow in his hand he bowed his head at Śrī Rāma's feet and sallied forth, full of rage. (82)

चौ०—रे खल का मारसि कपि भालू । मोहि बिलोकु तोर मैं कालू ॥
खोजत रहेउँ तोहि सुतघाती । आजु निपाति जुड़ावउँ छाती ॥ १ ॥
अस कहि छाड़ेसि बान प्रचंडा । लछिमन किए सकल सत खंडा ॥
कोटिन्ह आयुध रावन डारे । तिल प्रवान करि काटि निवारे ॥ २ ॥
पुनि निज बानन्ह कीन्ह प्रहारा । स्यंदनु भंजि सारथी मारा ॥
सत सत सर मारे दस भाला । गिरि सृंगन्ह जनु प्रबिसहिं ब्याला ॥ ३ ॥
पुनि सत सर मारा उर माहीं । परेउ धरनि तल सुधि कछु नाहीं ॥
उठा प्रबल पुनि मुरुछा जागी । छाड़िसि ब्रह्म दीन्हि जो साँगी ॥ ४ ॥

"Pooh ! You are making the monkeys and bears your target, O vile wretch; look at me, I am your death." "It is you whom I have been looking for, you slayer of my son. Today I will soothe my heart by killing you." So saying he discharged a flight of fierce arrows; but Lakṣmaṇa shivered them into a hundred pieces each. Nay, Rāvaṇa hurled upon him myriads of other missiles, but Lakṣmaṇa foiled them all by reducing them to particles as small as seasamum seeds. Again, Lakṣmaṇa assailed him with his own shafts, smashing his chariot and killing the charioteer. Nay, each of his ten heads he transfixed with a hundred arrows, which seemed like serpents boring their way into the peaks of a mountain. With a hundred arrows more he struck him in the breast: he fell senseless to the ground. On regaining his consciousness the mighty demon rose again and hurled a lance that had been bestowed on him by Brahmā (the Creator). (1–4)

छं०—सो ब्रह्म दत्त प्रचंड सक्ति अनंत उर लागी सही ।
पर्‌यो बीर बिकल उठाव दसमुख अतुल बल महिमा रही ॥
ब्रह्मांड भवन बिराज जाकें एक सिर जिमि रज कनी ।
तेहि चह उठावन मूढ़ रावन जान नहिं त्रिभुअन धनी ॥

That fierce lance, the gift of Brahmā, struck Lord Ananta (Lakṣmaṇa) right in the breast and the hero dropped to the ground full of agony. The ten-headed monster tried to lift the Prince and carry him off, but the glory of the demon's matchless strength proved ineffective. How foolish it was on the part of Rāvaṇa to have sought to lift him on one of whose (thousand) heads rest all the spheres of the universe like a mere grain of sand. He little knew that he was no other than the Lord of the three spheres.

दो०—देखि पवनसुत धायउ बोलत बचन कठोर ।
आवत कपिहि हन्यो तेहिं मुष्टि प्रहार प्रघोर ॥ ८३ ॥

The son of the wind-god, who perceived this, rushed forward speaking harsh words; but even as the monkey came near, the monster struck him a terrible blow with his fist. (83)

चौ०—जानु टेकि कपि भूमि न गिरा । उठा सँभारि बहुत रिस भरा ॥
मुठिका एक ताहि कपि मारा । परेउ सैल जनु बज्र प्रहारा ॥ १ ॥
मुरुछा गै बहोरि सो जागा । कपि बल बिपुल सराहन लागा ॥
धिग धिग मम पौरुष धिग मोही । जौं तैं जिअत रहेसि सुरद्रोही ॥ २ ॥
अस कहि लछिमन कहुँ कपि ल्यायो । देखि दसानन बिसमय पायो ॥
कह रघुबीर समुझु जियँ भ्राता । तुम्ह कृतांत भच्छक सुर त्राता ॥ ३ ॥
सुनत बचन उठि बैठ कृपाला । गई गगन सो सकति कराला ॥
पुनि कोदंड बान गहि धाए । रिपु सन्मुख अति आतुर आए ॥ ४ ॥

Hanumān sank on his knees but did not fall to the ground. Recovering himself, he rose in exceeding wrath and struck Rāvaṇa a blow with his fist; the demon fell like a mountain struck by lightning. When the spell of his swoon was over and consciousness returned to him, he began to admire the monkey's enormous strength. "Shame on my valour and shame on myself, if you are still alive, you enemy of gods!" So saying, Hanumān carried Lakṣmaṇa off to Śrī Rāma: the ten-headed monster was amazed at this sight. Said the Hero of Raghu's line, "Bear in mind, brother, that you are the devourer of Death and the saviour of the gods." Immediately on hearing these words the gracious prince (Lakṣmaṇa) arose and sat up, while the fierce lance vanished into the heavens. Taking his bow and arrows again he darted and came post-haste in front of the enemy. (1—4)

छं०—आतुर बहोरि बिभंजि स्यंदन सूत हति ब्याकुल कियो ।
गिर्‌यो धरनि दसकंधर बिकलतर बान सत बेध्यो हियो ॥
सारथी दूसर घालि रथ तेहि तुरत लंका लै गयो ।
रघुबीर बंधु प्रताप पुंज बहोरि प्रभु चरनन्हि नयो ॥

With great despatch Lakṣmaṇa smashed Rāvaṇa's chariot again and struck down his charioteer, who fell writhing with pain. Rāvaṇa, whose heart he transfixed with a hundred arrows, fell to the ground, much distressed. Another

charioteer came and laid him in his own chariot and immediately took him away to Lankā; while Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma's glorious brother, bowed at the Lord's feet again.

दो०—उहाँ दसानन जागि करि करै लाग कछु जग्य ।
राम बिरोध बिजय चह सठ हठ बस अति अग्य ॥ ८४ ॥

At the other end the ten-headed monster, on coming to himself, set to perform some sacrifice. In his perversity and rank ignorance the fool sought to gain victory even by antagonizing Śrī Rāma! (84)

चौ०—इहाँ बिभीषन सब सुधि पाई । सपदि जाइ रघुपतिहि सुनाई ॥
नाथ करइ रावन एक जागा । सिद्ध भएँ नहिं मरिहि अभागा ॥ १ ॥
पठवहु नाथ बेगि भट बंदर । करहिं बिधंस आव दसकंधर ॥
प्रात होत प्रभु सुभट पठाए । हनुमदादि अंगद सब धाए ॥ २ ॥
कौतुक कूदि चढ़े कपि लंका । पैठे रावन भवन असंका ॥
जग्य करत जबहीं सो देखा । सकल कपिन्ह भा क्रोध बिसेषा ॥ ३ ॥
रन ते निलज भाजि गृह आवा । इहाँ आइ बक ध्यान लगावा ॥
अस कहि अंगद मारा लाता । चितव न सठ स्वारथ मन राता ॥ ४ ॥

At this end Vibhīṣaṇa got all the information and, hastening to the Lord of the Raghus, apprised Him of everything. "My lord, Rāvaṇa is busy with a sacrificial performance; and if he completes it, the wretch will never die. Therefore, my lord, despatch some valiant monkeys at once, so that they may wreck his sacrifice and the ten-headed monster be compelled to return." As soon as the day broke the Lord sent out His champions,—Hanumān, Aṅgada and others,—who all rushed forward. In mere sport the monkeys sprang up to the fort of Lankā and fearlessly entered Rāvaṇa's palace. The moment they saw him engaged in a sacrifice all the monkeys grew wildly furious. "You shameless wretch, having run away home from the battle, you have sat down here and feigned meditation!" So saying Aṅgada struck him with his foot; but the fool did not even look at them, his mind being absorbed in the pursuit of his own end. (1—4)

छं०—नहिं चितव जब करि कोप कपि गहि दसन लातन्ह मारहीं ।
धरि केस नारि निकारि बाहेर तेऽतिदीन पुकारहीं ॥
तब उठेउ क्रुद्ध कृतांत सम गहि चरन बानर डारई ।
एहि बीच कपिन्ह बिधंस कृत मख देखि मन महुँ हारई ॥

When he refused to look at them, the monkeys in their fury bit him with their teeth and kicked him. His wives too they seized by their locks and dragged out of doors while they cried most piteously. Then at last he rose, furious as Death, and, catching hold of the monkeys by their legs, he threw them away. Meanwhile, when he saw that the monkeys had wrecked the sacrifice, he felt discomfited at heart,

दो०—जग्य बिधंसि कुसल कपि आए रघुपति पास ।
चलेउ निसाचर क्रुद्ध होइ त्यागि जिवन कै आस ॥ ८५ ॥

Having wrecked his sacrifice the monkeys safely returned to the Lord of the Raghus; while the demon (Rāvaṇa) set out ablaze with fury, abandoning all hope of life. (85)

चौ०—चलत होहिं अति असुभ भयंकर । बैठहिं गीध उड़ाइ सिरन्ह पर ॥
भयउ कालबस काहु न माना । कहेसि बजावहु जुद्ध निसाना ॥ १ ॥
चली तमीचर अनी अपारा । बहु गज रथ पदाति असवारा ।
प्रभु सन्मुख धाए खल कैसें । सलभ समूह अनल कहँ जैसें ॥ २ ॥
इहाँ देवतन्ह अस्तुति कीन्ही । दारुन बिपति हमहि एहिं दीन्ही ॥
अब जनि राम खेलावहु एही । अतिसय दुखित होति बैदेही ॥ ३ ॥
देव बचन सुनि प्रभु मुसुकाना । उठि रघुबीर सुधारे बाना ॥
जटा जूट दृढ़ बाँधें माथे । सोहहिं सुमन बीच बिच गाथे ॥ ४ ॥
अरुन नयन बारिद तनु स्यामा । अखिल लोक लोचनाभिरामा ॥
कटितट परिकर कस्यो निषंगा । कर कोदंड कठिन सारंगा ॥ ५ ॥

Evil omens of a most fearful nature occurred to him even as he went. Vultures flew and perched on his heads. Being in the jaws of death, he paid no heed to anyone and exclaimed: "Beat the drums of war." The demon host appeared endless as it marched on with its myriads of elephants, chariots, foot-soldiers and horsemen. The wicked demons rushed to face the Lord like a swarm of moths darting towards fire. At this end the gods prayed to the Lord: "This fellow (Rāvaṇa) has inflicted terrible suffering on us. Play with him no more, Rāma; Videha's Daughter (Sītā) is feeling most disconsolate." The Lord smiled to hear the gods' prayer; the Hero of Raghu's line rose and put His arrows in order. The matted locks on His head had been tightly coiled and were interlaced with flowers. With His ruddy eyes and body dark as a rain-cloud He ravished the eyes of the whole world. He fastened His quiver to a piece of cloth girt round His loins and took in His hand His formidable Śārnga bow. (1—5)

छं०—सारंग कर सुंदर निषंग सिलीमुखाकर कटि कस्यो ।
भुजदंड पीन मनोहरायत उर धरासुर पद लस्यो ॥
कह दास तुलसी जबहिं प्रभु सर चाप कर फेरन लगे ।
ब्रह्मांड दिग्गज कमठ अहि महि सिंधु भूधर डगमगे ॥

The Lord took the Śārnga bow in His hand and fastened to His waist the beautiful quiver with an inexhaustible stock of arrows. He had a pair of muscular arms and a charming and broad chest which was adorned with the print of the Brahman's (Bhṛgu's) foot. When the Lord, says Tulasīdāsa, commenced feeling the bow and arrow with His hands, the whole universe, including the elephants guarding the eight quarters, the divine Tortoise, the serpent-god (Śeṣa) and the earth with its oceans and mountains, began to tremble.

दो०—सोभा देखि हरषि सुर बरषहिं सुमन अपार ।
जय जय जय करुनानिधि छबि बल गुन आगार ॥ ८६ ॥

The gods rejoiced to see His beauty and rained down flowers in an endless shower, exclaiming "Glory, glory, all glory to the Fountain of mercy, the store-house of beauty, strength and goodness." (86)

चौ०—एहीं बीच निसाचर अनी । कसमसात आई अति घनी ॥
देखि चले सन्मुख कपि भट्टा । प्रलयकाल के जनु घन घट्टा ॥ १ ॥
बहु कृपान तरवारि चमंकहिं । जनु दहँ दिसि दामिनीं दमंकहिं ॥
गज रथ तुरग चिकार कठोरा । गर्जहिं मनहुँ बलाहक घोरा ॥ २ ॥
कपि लंगूर बिपुल नभ छाए । मनहुँ इंद्रधनु उए सुहाए ॥
उठइ धूरि मानहुँ जलधारा । बान बुंद भै बृष्टि अपारा ॥ ३ ॥
दुहुँ दिसि पर्बत करहिं प्रहारा । बज्रपात जनु बारहिं बारा ॥
रघुपति कोपि बान झरि लाई । घायल भै निसिचर समुदाई ॥ ४ ॥
लागत बान बीर चिक्करहीं । घुर्मि घुर्मि जहँ तहँ महि परहीं ॥
स्रवहिं सैल जनु निर्झर भारी । सोनित सरि कादर भयकारी ॥ ५ ॥

Meanwhile arrived the vast demon host with its overcrowded ranks. The moment the monkey warriors saw the army they advanced to meet it like the masses of clouds that gather at the time of universal destruction. A numberless swords and claymores flashed like gleams of lightning from every direction. The shrill cries of the elephants and horses and the rattling sound of the chariots resembled the terrible thundering of clouds. Myriads of monkeys' tails stretched across the heavens like an array of magnificent rainbows appearing in the sky. The dust rose in thick columns like streams of water in the air and the arrows shot forth in an endless shower like rain-drops. Mountains hurled from either side crashed like repeated strokes of lightning. The Lord of the Raghus in His fury let fly arrows in showers, which straightway wounded the demon crew The demon warriors shrieked with pain as the arrows struck them; and swinging round and round they fell to the ground here there and everywhere. Streaming with blood, the wounded demons looked like mountains with their large cascades; and the blood ran in the form of a river, the terror of cowards.

(1—5)

छं०—कादर भयंकर रुधिर सरिता चली परम अपावनी ।
दोउ कूल दल रथ रेत चक्र अबर्त बहति भयावनी ॥
जलजंतु गज पदचर तुरग खर बिबिध बाहन को गने ।
सर सक्ति तोमर सर्प चाप तरंग चर्म कमठ घने ॥

A most unholy river of blood, that smote recreants with terror, ran across the battle-field. With the two armies for its banks, the chariots for its intervening sands and their wheels for its whirlpools, it was a frightful flood indeed. The foot-soldiers, and even so elephants, horses, donkeys and other mounts of all

kinds, more than one could count, (that floated on the river) represented the various aquatic creatures; the arrows, lances and iron clubs (swept by it) stood for its serpents: the bows borne along the current represented its waves and the shields stood for its many tortoises.

दो०—बीर परहिं जनु तीर तरु मज्जा बहु बह फेन।
कादर देखि डरहिं तहँ सुभटन्ह के मन चेन॥ ८७॥

Warriors fell here and there like the trees on its banks and the abundant marrow of their bones represented its scum. Dastards shuddered at its very sight, while champions were delighted at heart to see it. (87)

चौ०—मज्जहिं भूत पिसाच बेताला। प्रमथ महा झोटिंग कराला॥
काक कंक लै भुजा उड़ाहीं। एक ते छीनि एक लै खाहीं॥ १॥
एक कहहिं ऐसिउ सौंघाई। सठहु तुम्हार दरिद्र न जाई॥
कहँरत भट घायल तट गिरे। जहँ तहँ मनहुँ अर्धजल परे॥ २॥
खैंचहिं गीध आँत तट भए। जनु बंसी खेलत चित दए॥
बहु भट बहहिं चढ़े खग जाहीं। जनु नावरि खेलहिं सरि माहीं॥ ३॥
जोगिनि भरि भरि खप्पर संचहिं। भूत पिसाच बधू नभ नंचहिं॥
भट कपाल करताल बजावहिं। चामुंडा नाना बिधि गावहिं॥ ४॥
जंबुक निकर कटक्कट कट्टहिं। खाहिं हुआहिं अघाहिं दपट्टहिं॥
कोटिन्ह रुंड मुंड बिनु डोल्लहिं। सीस परे महि जय जय बोल्लहिं॥ ५॥

Spirits, ghouls and goblins and even so frightful genii with a long shaggy mass of hair and Pramathas (Śiva's own attendants) took their plunge in it. Crows and kites flew off with human arms, which they tore from one another and ate themselves. Some said, "What a pity, fools, that you should continue to suffer from want even in such plenty ?" Wounded warriors fallen on the banks groaned like the moribund lying all round half in and half out of water (on the bank of a sacred river, lake etc. in order to ensure that they may breathe their last while their body is being washed by the sacred water since such a death is accounted as highly beneficial to the spirit of the dying man). Standing on its banks, vultures tore the entrails of the dead like fishermen angling with rapt attention. Many a dead warrior floated down with birds perched on them, as if the latter were enjoying a game of boating on the river. The Yoginīs (female attendants of Goddess Durgā) took to storing blood in skulls, while female spirits and sprites danced in the air. Even so Chāmuṇḍās (another class of female attendants of Durgā) sang songs in various strains, clashing the skulls of dead warriors like so many pairs of cymbals. Herds of jackals snapped their teeth as they tore the dead, feasted upon them and yelled; and, when surfeited, they snarled. Myriads of headless trunks trotted along the battle-field, while the heads lying on the ground shouted "Victory ! Victory !!" (1—5)

छं०—बोल्लहिं जो जय जय मुंड रुंड प्रचंड सिर बिनु धावहीं।
खप्परिन्ह खग्ग अलुज्झि जुज्झहिं सुभट भटन्ह ढहावहीं॥

वानर निसाचर निकर मर्दहिं राम बल दर्पित भए ।
संग्राम अंगन सुभट सोवहिं राम सर निकरन्हि हए ॥

The heads shouted "Victory! Victory!!" while headless trunks darted wildly about. Birds got entangled in skulls even as they contended with one another; while champions overthrew their rivals. Imperious through Śrī Rāma's strength, the monkeys crushed the demon crew; and mortally struck by Śrī Rāma's flight of arrows, the champions lay in eternal sleep on the field of death.

दो०—रावन हृदयँ बिचारा भा निसिचर संघार ।
मैं अकेल कपि भालु बहु माया करौं अपार ॥ ८८ ॥

Rāvaṇa thought within himself, "The demons have been wiped out and I am left alone, while the monkeys are still numerous. Let me, therefore, create illusions without number." (88)

चौ०—देवन्ह प्रभुहि पयादें देखा । उपजा उर अति छोभ बिसेषा ॥
सुरपति निज रथ तुरत पठावा । हरष सहित मातलि लै आवा ॥ १ ॥
तेज पुंज रथ दिब्य अनूपा । हरषि चढ़े कोसलपुर भूपा ॥
चंचल तुरग मनोहर चारी । अजर अमर मन सम गतिकारी ॥ २ ॥
रथारूढ़ रघुनाथहि देखी । धाए कपि बलु पाइ बिसेषी ॥
सही न जाइ कपिन्ह कै मारी । तब रावन माया बिस्तारी ॥ ३ ॥
सो माया रघुबीरहि बाँची । लछिमन कपिन्ह सो मानी साँची ॥
देखी कपिन्ह निसाचर अनी । अनुज सहित बहु कोसलधनी ॥ ४ ॥

When the gods saw that the Lord was on foot, they were exceedingly troubled at heart. Indra (the lord of heaven) forthwith despatched his own chariot, which Mātali (Indra's charioteer) gladly brought there. It was a heavenly and unique car, which was all splendour; the King of Kosalapura (Ayodhyā) gladly mounted it. It was driven by four high-spirited and charming horses, which knew no decay or death and flew as fast as thought. The monkeys rushed forward with renewed vigour when they saw the Lord of the Raghus mounted on a chariot. When Rāvaṇa felt that the monkey's onset was irresistible, he took to creating illusions. The illusive creation did not touch the Lord of the Raghus; while the monkeys, nay, even Lakṣmaṇa took it for real. The monkeys saw among a large demon host a number of Rāmas and as many Lakṣmaṇas. (1–4)

छं०—बहु राम लछिमन देखि मर्कट भालु मन अति अपडरे ।
जनु चित्र लिखित समेत लछिमन जहँ सो तहँ चितवहिं खरे ॥
निज सेन चकित बिलोकि हँसि सर चाप सजि कोसल धनी ।
माया हरी हरि निमिष महुँ हरषी सकल मर्कट अनी ॥

The monkeys and bears were much terrified at heart to see numerous Rāmas and Lakṣmaṇas. All of them, including Lakṣmaṇa, stood gazing like the

figures in a picture wherever they were. The Lord of Kosala smiled to see His army at a nonplus; He fitted an arrow to His bow and in a trice Śrī Hari dispersed the delusion to the delight of the whole monkey host.

दो०—बहुरि राम सब तन चितइ बोले बचन गँभीर ।
द्वंदजुद्ध देखहु सकल श्रमित भए अति बीर ॥ ८९ ॥

Śrī Rāma then cast His glance on all and spoke in meaningful words: "Watch now my duel (with Rāvaṇa); for all of you, my heroes, are extremely tired." (89)

चौ०—अस कहि रथ रघुनाथ चलावा । बिप्र चरन पंकज सिरु नावा ॥
तब लंकेस क्रोध उर छावा । गर्जत तर्जत सन्मुख धावा ॥ १ ॥
जीतेहु जे भट संजुग माहीं । सुनु तापस मैं तिन्ह सम नाहीं ॥
रावन नाम जगत जस जाना । लोकप जाकें बंदीखाना ॥ २ ॥
खर दूषन बिराध तुम्ह मारा । बधेहु ब्याध इव बालि बिचारा ॥
निसिचर निकर सुभट संघारेहु । कुंभकरन घननादहि मारेहु ॥ ३ ॥
आजु बयरु सबु लेउँ निबाही । जौं रन भूप भाजि नहिं जाही ॥
आजु करउँ खलु काल हवाले । परेहु कठिन रावन के पाले ॥ ४ ॥
सुनि दुर्बचन कालबस जाना । बिहँसि बचन कह कृपानिधाना ॥
सत्य सत्य सब तव प्रभुताई । जल्पसि जनि देखाउ मनुसाई ॥ ५ ॥

So saying, the Lord of the Raghus bowed His head at the Brahmans' lotus feet even as He urged forward His chariot. Thereupon Rāvaṇa felt much enraged at heart and darted to meet Him, challenging Him in a thundering voice: "Listen, hermit: I am not like one of those warriors whom you have vanquished in battle. My name is Rāvaṇa, whose glory is known all the world over, and whose prison holds within its walls the regents of the spheres! You slew Khara, Dūṣaṇa and Virādha and killed poor Vālī even as a hunter would shoot his game. Nay, you wiped out a host of demon champions and killed even Kumbhakarṇa and Meghanāda. Today I will wreak vengeance on you for all this unless, O prince, you flee away from the battle. Today I will surely give you over to death; for it is the relentless Rāvaṇa whom you have to deal with." Hearing his foul talk the All-merciful took him as doomed to death and smilingly replied as follows: "True, true is all your greatness. But prate no more; show your valour if you can. (1—5)

छं०—जनि जल्पना करि सुजसु नासहि नीति सुनहि करहि छमा ।
संसार महँ पूरुष त्रिबिध पाटल रसाल पनस समा ॥
एक सुमनप्रद एक सुमन फल एक फलइ केवल लागहीं ।
एक कहहिं कहहिं करहिं अपर एक करहिं कहत न बागहीं ॥

"Do not ruin your reputation by bragging. Pray, excuse me and listen to a sound maxim. There are three types of men in this world—those resembling the rose, the mango and the bread-tree respectively. The one gives flowers

alone, the second flowers and fruit both and the third yields fruit alone. Even so the one talks, the second talks as well as does, while the third does, but never goes about proclaiming it."

दो०—राम बचन सुनि बिहँसा मोहि सिखावत ग्यान ।
बयरु करत नहिं तब डरे अब लागे प्रिय प्रान ॥ ९० ॥

Rāvaṇa heartily laughed when he heard Śrī Rāma's words. "Ah! You teach me wisdom! You did not shrink from waging war against me then; now it seems you hold your life very dear." (90)

चौ०—कहि दुर्बचन क्रुद्ध दसकंधर । कुलिस समान लाग छाँड़ै सर ॥
नानाकार सिलीमुख धाए । दिसि अरु बिदिसि गगन महि छाए ॥ १ ॥
पावक सर छाँड़ेउ रघुबीरा । छन महुँ जरे निसाचर तीरा ॥
छाड़िसि तीब्र सक्ति खिसिआई । बान संग प्रभु फेरि चलाई ॥ २ ॥
कोटिन्ह चक्र त्रिसूल पबारै । बिनु प्रयास प्रभु काटि निवारै ॥
निफल होहिं रावन सर कैसें । खल के सकल मनोरथ जैसें ॥ ३ ॥
तब सत बान सारथी मारेसि । परेउ भूमि जय राम पुकारेसि ॥
राम कृपा करि सूत उठावा । तब प्रभु परम क्रोध कहुँ पावा ॥ ४ ॥

Having uttered these taunting words Rāvaṇa furiously began to discharge arrows like so many thunderbolts. Shafts of various designs flew and filled all the quarters, nay, every corner of the earth and heavens. The Hero of Raghu's line let fly a fiery dart, and in a moment the demon's bolts were all consumed. Rāvaṇa ground his teeth out of frustration and hurled a fierce lance; but the Lord sent it back along with His arrow. The demon then cast a cloud of discs and tridents; but the Lord frustrated them by tearing them asunder without any exertion. Rāvaṇa's arrows proved as futile as the schemes of the wicked invariably are. Then with a hundred arrows he struck Śrī Rāma's charioteer (Mātali), who fell to the ground crying "Victory to Śrī Rāma!" Śrī Rāma took compassion and lifted up the driver; He was now stirred up with a terrible fury. (1—4

छं०—भए क्रुद्ध जुद्ध बिरुद्ध रघुपति त्रोन सायक कसमसे ।
कोदंड धुनि अति चंड सुनि मनुजाद सब मारुत ग्रसे ॥
मंदोदरी उर कंप कंपति कमठ भू भूधर त्रसे ।
चिक्करहिं दिग्गज दसन गहि महि देखि कौतुक सुर हँसे ॥

When the Lord of the Raghus encountered the enemy on the battle-field, full of rage, the arrows in His quiver vied with one another in their endeavour to shoot forth. The man-eating demons were all seized with terror at the sound of the most awful twang of His bow. Mandodarī's heart quaked; the ocean, the Tortoise supporting the globe, the earth and the mountains trembled; and the elephants guarding the quarters squealed, and clutched the globe with their tusks. The gods smiled at this amusing sight.

दो०—तानेउ चाप श्रवन लगि छाँड़े बिसिख कराल।
राम मारगन गन चले लहलहात जनु ब्याल ॥ ९१ ॥

Śrī Rāma drew the bow-string right up to His ear and let fly His terrible darts, which sped forth vibrating like so many serpents. (91)

चौ०—चले बान सपच्छ जनु उरगा। प्रथमहिं हतेउ सारथी तुरगा॥
रथ बिभंजि हति केतु पताका। गर्जा अति अंतर बल थाका॥ १ ॥
तुरत आन रथ चढ़ि खिसिआना। अस्त्र सस्त्र छाँड़ेसि बिधि नाना॥
बिफल होहिं सब उद्यम ताके। जिमि परद्रोह निरत मनसा के॥ २ ॥
तब रावन दस सूल चलावा। बाजि चारि महि मारि गिरावा॥
तुरग उठाइ कोपि रघुनायक। खैंचि सरासन छाँड़े सायक॥ ३ ॥
रावन सिर सरोज बनचारी। चलि रघुबीर सिलीमुख धारी॥
दस दस बान भाल दस मारे। निसरि गए चले रुधिर पनारे॥ ४ ॥
स्रवत रुधिर धायउ बलवाना। प्रभु पुनि कृत धनु सर संधाना॥
तीस तीर रघुबीर पबारे। भुजन्हि समेत सीस महि पारे॥ ५ ॥
काटतहीं पुनि भए नबीने। राम बहोरि भुजा सिर छीने॥
प्रभु बहु बार बाहु सिर हए। कटत झटिति पुनि नूतन भए॥ ६ ॥
पुनि पुनि प्रभु काटत भुज सीसा। अति कौतुकी कोसलाधीसा॥
रहे छाइ नभ सिर अरु बाहू। मानहुँ अमित केतु अरु राहू॥ ७ ॥

The arrows flew like winged serpents. At the first onset they killed Rāvaṇa's charioteer and horses; then, smashing the car, they tore off his ensign and flags. Even though his strength had inwardly failed him, he roared aloud and, immediately mounting another car, ground his teeth and hurled missiles and other weapons of every description. All his efforts, however, failed like those of a man whose mind is ever intent on harming others. Then Rāvaṇa hurled forth ten pikes, which struck the four horses of Śrī Rāma's chariot and overthrew them. The Lord raised His horses and, drawing the bow-string, let fly His darts in great fury. The arrows of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) sped forth like a string of bees* to enter Rāvaṇa's heads, which compared a bed of lotuses. Śrī Rāma struck each of his brows with ten arrows, which pierced through them; and blood gushed forth in torrents. Though bleeding profusely, the mighty demon rushed forward; the Lord once more fitted arrows to His bow. The Hero of Raghu's line discharged thirty shafts, which shot down his heads and arms to the ground. But they grew afresh as soon as they were severed; Śrī Rāma, however, struck off his heads and arms once more. Time after time the Lord smote off his arms and heads; but they were renewed as soon as they were blown off. Again and again the Lord tore off his arms and heads; for the King of Kosala takes delight in playing. The sky was full of heads and arms like an infinite number of Ketus and Rāhus. (1—7)

* "The word 'Silīmukha' in the original bears a double meaning. It denotes both an arrow and a bee. Hence the sentence has been translated as above.

छं०—जनु राहु केतु अनेक नभ पथ स्त्रवत सोनित धावहीं ।
रघुबीर तीर प्रचंड लागहिं भूमि गिरन न पावहीं ॥
एक एक सर सिर निकर छेदे नभ उड़त इमि सोहहीं ।
जनु कोपि दिनकर कर निकर जहँ तहँ बिधुंतुद पोहहीं ॥

It seemed as though multitudes of Rāhus and Ketus were rushing through the air, streaming with blood; hit by the terrible shafts of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) again and again, they could not fall to the ground. The arrows, as they flew through the air, each transfixing a set of heads, seemed like so many rays of the angry sun each strung all over with a number of Rāhus.

दो०—जिमि जिमि प्रभु हर तासु सिर तिमि तिमि होहिं अपार ।
सेवत बिषय बिबर्ध जिमि नित नित नूतन मार ॥ ९२ ॥

As quickly as the Lord struck off his heads, they were renewed without end, like the passions of a man, which grow ever more and more even as he enjoys the pleasures of sense. (92)

चौ०—दसमुख देखि सिरन्ह कै बाढ़ी । बिसरा मरन भई रिस गाढ़ी ॥
गर्जेउ मूढ़ महा अभिमानी । धायउ दसहु सरासन तानी ॥ १ ॥
समर भूमि दसकंधर कोप्यो । बरषि बान रघुपति रथ तोप्यो ॥
दंड एक रथ देखि न परेऊ । जनु निहार महुँ दिनकर दुरेऊ ॥ २ ॥
हाहाकार सुरन्ह जब कीन्हा । तब प्रभु कोपि कारमुक लीन्हा ॥
सर निवारि रिपु के सिर काटे । ते दिसि बिदिसि गगन महि पाटे ॥ ३ ॥
काटे सिर नभ मारग धावहिं । जय जय धुनि करि भय उपजावहिं ॥
कहँ लछिमन सुग्रीव कपीसा । कहँ रघुबीर कोसलाधीसा ॥ ४ ॥

When the ten-headed monster perceived the multiplication of his heads, he thought no more of his own death, but was seized with burning wrath. The fool roared in his great pride and rushed forward with all his ten bows drawn. Flying into a rage on the battle-field, the ten-headed monster discharged a shower of arrows and screened with it the chariot of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), which was lost to sight for nearly half an hour, even as the sun is obscured by mist. When the gods raised a piteous cry, the Lord took up His bow, full of wrath. Intercepting the enemy's arrows He struck off his heads, which covered all the quarters as well as the intermediate points of the compass, as well as heaven and earth. The severed heads flew through the air and struck terror into the monkeys' hearts as they uttered the cries of "Victory, Victory !! Where is Lakṣmaṇa ? Where is Sugrīva, the lord of the monkeys ? Where is the hero of Raghu's line, the lord of Kosala ?"

(1—4)

छं०—कहँ रामु कहि सिर निकर धाए देखि मर्कट भजि चले ।
संधानि धनु रघुबंसमनि हँसि सरन्हि सिर बेधे भले ॥

सिर मालिका कर कालिका गहि बृंद बृंदन्हि बहु मिलीं ।
करि रुधिर सरि मज्जनु मनहुँ संग्राम बट पूजन चलीं ॥

"Where is Rāma?" cried the multitudes of heads as they sped. The monkeys took to flight as they saw them. The Jewel of Raghu's line smilingly fitted arrows to His bow and shot the heads through and through. Taking a rosary of skulls in their hands a large number of Kālikās (female attendants of Goddess Kālī) collected in numerous batches, as though having bathed in the stream of blood they had proceeded to worship the banyan tree of the battle.

दो०—पुनि दसकंठ क्रुद्ध होइ छाँड़ी सक्ति प्रचंड ।
चली बिभीषन सन्मुख मनहुँ काल कर दंड ॥ ९३ ॥

Then the ten-headed monster in his fury hurled forth his terrible lance, which flew straight towards Vibhīṣaṇa like the rod of Death. (93)

चौ०—आवत देखि सक्ति अति घोरा । प्रनतारति भंजन पन मोरा ॥
तुरत बिभीषन पाछें मेला । सन्मुख राम सहेउ सोइ सेला ॥ १ ॥
लागि सक्ति मुरुछा कछु भई । प्रभु कृत खेल सुरन्ह बिकलई ॥
देखि बिभीषन प्रभु श्रम पायो । गहि कर गदा क्रुद्ध होइ धायो ॥ २ ॥
रे कुभाग्य सठ मंद कुबुद्धे । तैं सुर नर मुनि नाग बिरुद्धे ॥
सादर सिव कहुँ सीस चढ़ाए । एक एक के कोटिन्ह पाए ॥ ३ ॥
तेहि कारन खल अब लगि बाँच्यो । अब तव कालु सीस पर नाच्यो ॥
राम बिमुख सठ चहसि संपदा । अस कहि हनेसि माझ उर गदा ॥ ४ ॥

When the Lord saw the most fearful lance coming, He thought to Himself, "It is My sacred vow to put an end to the distress of the suppliant!" Instantly Śrī Rāma put Vibhīṣaṇa behind Him and exposed Himself to the full force of the spear. When the lance struck Him, the Lord fainted for a while. Although it was a mere sport on the part of the Lord, the gods were filled with dismay When Vibhīṣaṇa saw that the Lord had been grievously hurt, he seized his club and rushed forward full of rage. "You wretched, vile and perverse fool! You have antagonized gods, human beings, sages and Nāgas alike. You devoutly offered your heads to Lord Śiva and have got millions for one in return. It is for this reason, O wretch, that you have been spared till this time; your death, however, seems to be impending now. Fool, you seek happiness through enmity with Śrī Rāma?" So saying, Vibhīṣaṇa struck his brother right on the chest with his club. (1—4)

छं०—उर माझ गदा प्रहार घोर कठोर लागत महि पर्‌यो ।
दस बदन सोनित स्रवत पुनि संभारि धायो रिस भर्‌यो ॥
द्वौ भिरे अतिबल मल्लजुद्ध बिरुद्ध एकु एकहि हनै ।
रघुबीर बल दर्पित बिभीषनु घालि नहिं ता कहुँ गनै ॥

At the terrible impact of the mighty club on his chest Rāvaṇa fell to the ground, all his ten mouths spouting blood. But he picked himself up again and darted forward full of fury. The two mighty champions closed with each other in a wrestling contest, each mauling the other. Vibhīṣaṇa, however, who was inspired with the strength of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line), deemed his adversary as of no account.

दो०—उमा बिभीषनु रावनहि सन्मुख चितव कि काउ।
सो अब भिरत काल ज्यों श्रीरघुबीर प्रभाउ ॥ ९४ ॥

Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) Vibhīṣaṇa would never have dared of himself to look Rāvaṇa in the face. Armed with the might of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line), however, he now closed with his brother like Death himself. (94)

चौ०—देखा श्रमित बिभीषनु भारी। धायउ हनूमान गिरि धारी ॥
रथ तुरंग सारथी निपाता। हृदय माझ तेहि मारेसि लाता ॥ १ ॥
ठाढ़ रहा अति कंपित गाता। गयउ बिभीषनु जहँ जनत्राता ॥
पुनि रावन कपि हतेउ पचारी। चलेउ गगन कपि पूँछ पसारी ॥ २ ॥
गहिसि पूँछ कपि सहित उड़ाना। पुनि फिरि भिरेउ प्रबल हनुमाना ॥
लरत अकास जुगल सम जोधा। एकहि एकु हनत करि क्रोधा ॥ ३ ॥
सोहहिं नभ छल बल बहु करहीं। कज्जलगिरि सुमेरु जनु लरहीं ॥
बुधि बल निसिचर परइ न पार्‌यो। तब मारुतसुत प्रभु संभार्‌यो ॥ ४ ॥

Perceiving Vibhīṣaṇa much exhausted, Hanumān rushed forward with a rock in his hand; crushing the chariot, the horses and the charioteer all at once he gave Rāvaṇa a kick right in his breast. The demon, however, kept standing though shaking violently all over. Meanwhile Vibhīṣaṇa withdrew into the presence of Śrī Rāma (the Protector of His devotees). Rāvaṇa thereupon challenged and assailed the monkey (Hanumān), who ascended into the air spreading his tail. Rāvaṇa laid hold of his tail, but the monkey (Hanumān) flew along with him. The mighty Hanumān then turned and closed with him. The two well-matched warriors fought overhead, each striking the other in great fury. Putting forth all their strength and stratagem while in the air the two looked like a mountain of soot and Mount Sumeru contending with each other. When the demon could not be overthrown either through wit or through physical force, the son of the wind-god invoked his lord. (1—4)

छं०—संभारि श्रीरघुबीर धीर पचारि कपि रावनु हन्यो।
महि परत पुनि उठि लरत देवन्ह जुगल कहुँ जय जय भन्यो ॥
हनुमंत संकट देखि मर्कट भालु क्रोधातुर चले।
रन मत्त रावन सकल सुभट प्रचंड भुज बल दलमले ॥

Invoking the Hero of Raghu's line, the strong-minded Hanumān challenged and struck Rāvaṇa. The two fell to the ground and rising again resumed fighting. The gods shouted 'Victory' to both. Seeing Hanumān in such a strait, the

monkeys and bears sallied forth in furious haste: while Rāvaṇa, who was battle-mad, crushed all the champions by the tremendous might of his arm.

दो०—तब रघुबीर पचारे धाए कीस प्रचंड ।
कपि बल प्रबल देखि तेहिं कीन्ह प्रगट पाषंड ॥ ९५ ॥

Then, rallied by the Hero of Raghu's line, the fierce monkeys rushed forward. Seeing the overwhelming monkey host, Rāvaṇa, however, displayed his Māyā (black art) (95)

चौ०—अंतरधान भयउ छन एका । पुनि प्रगटे खल रूप अनेका ॥
रघुपति कटक भालु कपि जेते । जहँ तहँ प्रगट दसानन तेते ॥ १ ॥
देखे कपिन्ह अमित दससीसा । जहँ तहँ भजे भालु अरु कीसा ॥
भागे बानर धरहिं न धीरा । त्राहि त्राहि लछिमन रघुबीरा ॥ २ ॥
दहँ दिसि धावहिं कोटिन्ह रावन । गर्जहिं घोर कठोर भयावन ॥
डरे सकल सुर चले पराई । जय कै आस तजहु अब भाई ॥ ३ ॥
सब सुर जिते एक दसकंधर । अब बहु भए तकहु गिरि कंदर ॥
रहे बिरंचि संभु मुनि ग्यानी । जिन्ह जिन्ह प्रभु महिमा कछु जानी ॥ ४ ॥

He became invisible for a moment and then the wretch revealed himself in multitudinous forms. The ten-headed monster appeared in as many forms as there were bears and monkeys in the army of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). The monkey host beheld numberless Rāvaṇas; the bears and monkeys then fled in every direction. The monkeys had no courage to stay; they fled crying, "Help, Lakṣmaṇa! Help, Raghuvīra (Hero of Raghu's line)!" Myriads of Rāvaṇas darted in all directions, thundering in a deep, shrill and frightful voice. All the gods took flight in panic crying, "Now, brethren, abandon all hope of victory. A single Rāvaṇa subdued the whole heavenly host. Now that he has been multiplied, let us seek mountain caves." Only Brahmā (the Creator), Lord Śambhu (Śiva) and the wise seers, whoever knew something of the Lord's glory, remained unshaken. (1—4)

छं०—जाना प्रताप ते रहे निर्भय कपिन्ह रिपु माने फुरे ।
चले बिचलि मर्कट भालु सकल कृपाल पाहि भयातुरे ॥
हनुमंत अंगद नील नल अतिबल लरत रन बाँकुरे ।
मर्दहिं दसानन कोटि कोटिन्ह कपट भू भट अंकुरे ॥

They who understood the Lord's might remained fearless. But the monkeys took the apparitions for real enemies. They all lost courage and fled, monkeys and bears alike, crying in their dismay: "Protect us, our merciful lord!" The most powerful Hanumān, Angada, Nīla and Nala, who were all valiant in battle, fought and crushed the myriads of gallant Rāvaṇas that had sprouted on the soil of deception.

दो०—सुर बानर देखे बिकल हँस्यो कोसलाधीस ।
सजि सारंग एक सर हते सकल दससीस ॥ ९६ ॥

The Lord of Kosala smiled to see the dismay of the gods and the monkeys. He fitted an arrow to His famous Śārnga bow and wiped out the whole host of illusive Rāvaṇas. (96)

चौ०—प्रभु छन महुँ माया सब काटी। जिमि रबि उएँ जाहिं तम फाटी॥
रावनु एकु देखि सुर हरषे। फिरे सुमन बहु प्रभु पर बरषे॥ १॥
भुज उठाइ रघुपति कपि फेरे। फिरे एक एकन्ह तब टेरे॥
प्रभु बलु पाइ भालु कपि धाए। तरल तमकि संजुग महि आए॥ २॥
अस्तुति करत देवतन्हि देखें। भयउँ एक मैं इन्ह के लेखें॥
सठहु सदा तुम्ह मोर मरायल। अस कहि कोपि गगन पर धायल॥ ३॥
हाहाकार करत सुर भागे। खलहु जाहु कहँ मोरें आगे॥
देखि बिकल सुर अंगद धायो। कूदि चरन गहि भूमि गिरायो॥ ४॥

In a trice the Lord dispersed the whole phantom, even as the veil of darkness is torn asunder with the rising of the sun. The gods rejoiced to see only one Rāvaṇa and, turning back, rained abundant flowers on the Lord. Raising His arm, the Lord of the Raghus rallied the monkeys, who returned, each shouting to other. Inspired by the might of their lord, the bears and monkeys ran; and leaping briskly they arrived on the battle-field. When Rāvaṇa saw the gods extolling Śrī Rāma, he thought to himself, "They think I am now reduced to one." "Fools! you have ever been victims of my thrashing!" So saying he sprang into the air with great indignation. As the gods fled uttering a piteous cry, Rāvaṇa said, "Wretches, whither can you go from my presence?" Seeing the distress of the gods, Angada rushed forward and with a bound seized Rāvaṇa by the foot and threw him to the ground. (1—4)

छं०—गहि भूमि पार्‌यो लात मार्‌यो बालिसुत प्रभु पहिं गयो।
संभारि उठि दसकंठ घोर कठोर रव गर्जत भयो॥
करि दाप चाप चढ़ाइ दस संधानि सर बहु बरषई।
किए सकल भट घायल भयाकुल देखि निज बल हरषई॥

Having seized Rāvaṇa and thrown him to the ground, Vālī's son (Angada) gave him a kick and then rejoined his lord. The ten-headed monster, on recovering himself, rose again and roared terribly in a shrill voice. Proudly drawing the string of all his ten bows he fitted a dart to each and rained a flight of arrows, wounding all the warriors in the enemy's ranks to their utter dismay and confusion, and rejoiced to see his own might.

दो०—तब रघुपति रावन के सीस भुजा सर चाप।
काटे बहुत बढ़े पुनि जिमि तीरथ कर पाप॥ ९७॥

Thereupon the Lord of the Raghus tore off Rāvaṇa's heads and arms, along with the arrows and bows, more than once. But each time they all multiplied like sins committed in a holy place. (97)

चौ०—सिर भुज बाढ़ि देखि रिपु केरी । भालु कपिन्ह रिस भई घनेरी ॥
मरत न मूढ़ कटेहुँ भुज सीसा । धाए कोपि भालु भट कीसा ॥ १ ॥
बालितनय मारुति नल नीला । बानरराज दुबिद बलसीला ॥
बिटप महीधर करहिं प्रहारा । सोइ गिरि तरु गहि कपिन्ह सो मारा ॥ २ ॥
एक नखन्हि रिपु बपुष बिदारी । भागि चलहिं एक लातन्ह मारी ॥
तब नल नील सिरन्हि चढ़ि गयऊ । नखन्हि लिलार बिदारत भयऊ ॥ ३ ॥
रुधिर देखि बिषाद उर भारी । तिन्हहि धरन कहुँ भुजा पसारी ॥
गहे न जाहिं करन्हि पर फिरहीं । जनु जुग मधुप कमल बन चरहीं ॥ ४ ॥
कोपि कूदि द्वौ धरेसि बहोरी । महि पटकत भजे भुजा मरोरी ॥
पुनि सकोप दस धनु कर लीन्हे । सरन्हि मारि घायल कपि कीन्हे ॥ ५ ॥
हनुमदादि मुरुछित करि बंदर । पाइ प्रदोष हरष दसकंधर ॥
मुरुछित देखि सकल कपि बीरा । जामवंत धायउ रनधीरा ॥ ६ ॥
संग भालु भूधर तरु धारी । मारन लगे पचारि पचारी ॥
भयउ क्रुद्ध रावन बलवाना । गहि पद महि पटकइ भट नाना ॥ ७ ॥
देखि भालुपति निज दल घाता । कोपि माझ उर मारेसि लाता ॥ ८ ॥

The bears and monkeys grew furious when they saw the repeated renewal of Rāvaṇa's heads and arms. "This fool would not die even though his arms and heads are cut off !" So saying, the bear and monkey warriors darted towards him in great fury. Vāli's son (Angada), the son of the wind-god, Nala, Nīla, Sugrīva (the king of the monkeys) and Dwivida, all mighty heroes, hurled trees and rocks on him. Rāvaṇa, however, caught them and threw the same back upon the monkeys. Some of the monkeys tore the enemy's body with their claws, while others would kick him and run away. Then Nala and Nīla climbed up his heads and set to tearing his foreheads with their claws. When he saw blood coming, he felt much troubled at heart and moved up his arms to catch hold of the monkeys. But they were not to be caught and leapt about from one hand to another like a pair of bees hovering over a bed of lotuses. At last with a furious bound he clutched them both; but before he could dash them to the ground, they twisted his arms and ran away. Again in his fury he took ten bows in his hands and with his arrows struck and wounded the monkeys. Having rendered Hanumān and other monkey chiefs senseless he rejoiced to see the approach of night. Seeing all the monkey heroes in a swoon the valiant Jāmbavān rushed forward with a host of bears carrying rocks and trees, which they hurled upon him, challenging him again and again. This enraged the mighty Rāvaṇa, who seized a number of the warriors by the foot and began dashing them to the ground. Jāmbavān (the king of the bears) flew into a rage when he saw the havoc wrought on his host, and gave Rāvaṇa a kick on the breast. (1—8)

छं०—उर लात घात प्रचंड लागत बिकल रथ ते महि परा ।
गहि भालु बीसहुँ कर मनहुँ कमलन्हि बसे निसि मधुकरा ॥
मुरुछित बिलोकि बहोरि पद हति भालुपति प्रभु पहिं गयो ।
निसि जानि स्यंदन घालि तेहि तब सूत जतनु करत भयो ॥

The violent impact of the foot on his breast made Rāvaṇa senseless and he fell from his chariot to the ground, grasping a bear in each of his twenty hands, like bees reposing by night in the folds of the lotus. Seeing him unconscious, the king of the bears struck him with his foot once more and rejoined the Lord. Perceiving that it was night, the charioteer lifted him on to his chariot and then tried to bring him back to his senses.

दो०—मुरुछा बिगत भालु कपि सब आए प्रभु पास ।
निसिचर सकल रावनहि घेरि रहे अति त्रास ॥ ९८ ॥

On recovering from their swoon the bears and monkeys all arrived in the presence of the Lord, while all the demons stood round Rāvaṇa in great consternation. (98)

[PAUSE 26 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—तेही निसि सीता पहिं जाई । त्रिजटा कहि सब कथा सुनाई ॥
सिर भुज बाढ़ि सुनत रिपु केरी । सीता उर भइ त्रास घनेरी ॥ १ ॥
मुख मलीन उपजी मन चिंता । त्रिजटा सन बोली तब सीता ॥
होइहि कहा कहसि किन माता । केहि बिधि मरिहि बिस्व दुखदाता ॥ २ ॥
रघुपति सर सिर कटेहुँ न मरई । बिधि बिपरीत चरित सब करई ॥
मोर अभाग्य जिआवत ओही । जेहिं हौं हरि पद कमल बिछोही ॥ ३ ॥
जेहिं कृत कपट कनक मृग झूठा । अजहुँ सो दैव मोहि पर रूठा ॥
जेहिं बिधि मोहि दुख दुसह सहाए । लछिमन कहुँ कटु बचन कहाए ॥ ४ ॥
रघुपति बिरह सबिष सर भारी । तकि तकि मार बार बहु मारी ॥
ऐसेहुँ दुख जो राख मम प्राना । सोइ बिधि ताहि जिआव न आना ॥ ५ ॥
बहु बिधि कर बिलाप जानकी । करि करि सुरति कृपानिधान की ॥
कह त्रिजटा सुनु राजकुमारी । उर सर लागत मरइ सुरारी ॥ ६ ॥
प्रभु ताते उर हतइ न तेही । एहि के हृदयँ बसति बैदेही ॥ ७ ॥

That very night the demoness Trijaṭā called on Sītā and told Her the whole story. When Sītā heard of the renewal of the enemy's heads and arms, She felt much dismayed at heart. She wore a doleful countenance and Her mind was filled with anxiety. Then Sītā addressed Trijaṭā thus: "Why do you not tell me, mother, what is going to happen? How can this plague of the universe be obliterated? He does not die even though the arrows of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) have struck off his heads. It is Heaven who is disposing of things perversely. Nay, it is my ill luck that sustains him, the same misfortune which separated me from Śrī Hari's lotus feet. The fate which created the phantom of a fictitious deer of gold still frowns at me. The same Providence who made me suffer terrible woes and prompted me to speak harsh words to Lakṣmaṇa, nay, who pierced me through and through time and again with the mighty and poisoned shafts of separation from the Lord of the Raghus, and who keeps me alive even under such trying circumstances,—it is He and He alone who is conserving Rāvaṇa's life." With

many such words did Janaka's Daughter make lament as She recalled to Her mind the All-merciful. Trijaṭā replied: "Listen, O Princess: the enemy of the gods will surely die if an arrow pierces his breast. But the Lord is careful not to strike him there; for He knows that Videha's Daughter (Yourself) abides in his heart. (1--7)

छं०—एहि के हृदयँ बस जानकी जानकी उर मम बास है ।
मम उदर भुअन अनेक लागत बान सब कर नास है ॥
सुनि बचन हरष बिषाद मन अति देखि पुनि त्रिजटाँ कहा ।
अब मरिहि रिपु एहि बिधि सुनहि सुंदरि तजहि संसय महा ॥

"He is prevented by the thought that Janaka's Daughter dwells in Rāvaṇa's heart and that Jānakī's heart is His own abode; in His belly, again, are contained the numberless spheres, which will all perish the moment His arrow pierces Rāvaṇa's heart." Trijaṭā's explanation filled Sītā's mind with both joy and sorrow in a superlative degree. Perceiving this Trijaṭā spoke again: "Now listen, fair lady, how your enemy will meet his death, and shake off the great misgiving which still haunts your mind.

दो०—काटत सिर होइहि बिकल छुटि जाइहि तव ध्यान ।
तब रावनहि हृदय महुँ मरिहहिं रामु सुजान ॥ ९९ ॥

"Rāvaṇa will get disconcerted when his heads are cut off, with the result that you will escape his mind. That particular moment will the all-wise Śrī Rāma strike him in his heart." (99)

चौ०—अस कहि बहुत भाँति समुझाई । पुनि त्रिजटा निज भवन सिधाई ॥
राम सुभाउ सुमिरि बैदेही । उपजी बिरह बिथा अति तेही ॥ १ ॥
निसिहि ससिहि निंदति बहु भाँती । जुग सम भई सिराति न राती ॥
करति बिलाप मनहिं मन भारी । राम बिरहँ जानकी दुखारी ॥ २ ॥
जब अति भयउ बिरह उर दाहू । फरकेउ बाम नयन अरु बाहू ॥
सगुन बिचारि धरी मन धीरा । अब मिलिहहिं कृपाल रघुबीरा ॥ ३ ॥
इहाँ अर्धनिसि रावनु जागा । निज सारथि सन खीझन लागा ॥
सठ रनभूमि छड़ाइसि मोही । धिग धिग अधम मंदमति तोही ॥ ४ ॥
तेहिं पद गहि बहु बिधि समुझावा । भोरु भएँ रथ चढ़ि पुनि धावा ॥
सुनि आगवनु दसानन केरा । कपि दल खरभर भयउ घनेरा ॥ ५ ॥
जहँ तहँ भूधर बिटप उपारी । धाए कटकटाइ भट भारी ॥ ६ ॥

With many such words did Trijaṭā comfort Sītā and then returned to her residence. As She recalled Śrī Rāma's kind disposition Videha's Daughter was overwhelmed with the anguish of separation from Him. She reproached the night and the moon in many ways. "The night has already assumed the length of an age and does not end," She added. Disconsolate at Her separation from Śrī Rāma, Janaka's Daughter grievously lamented within Herself.

When Her agony of separation grew acute, Her left eye and arm throbbed. Considering it to be a good omen, She took heart and said to Herself, "The gracious Hero of Raghu's line will surely meet me." In his palace Ravana recovered from his swoon at midnight and cut up rough with his charioteer, "Fool, to have severed me from the battle-field, shame, shame on you, O vile dullard!" The charioteer clasped his feet and deprecated his anger in many ways. As soon as it was dawn Ravana mounted his car and sallied forth again. There was a great stir in the monkey host at the news of Ravana's return. Tearing up mountains and trees from wherever they could, mighty warriors rushed forward gnashing their teeth. (1—6)

छं०—धाए जो मर्कट बिकट भालु कराल कर भूधर धरा ।
अति कोप करहिं प्रहार मारत भजि चले रजनीचरा ॥
बिचलाइ दल बलवंत कीसन्ह घेरि पुनि रावनु लियो ।
चहुँ दिसि चपेटन्हि मारि नखन्हि बिदारि तनु ब्याकुल कियो ॥

The fierce monkeys and terrible bears darted with mountains in their hands, which they hurled forth with the utmost fury. The demons, who were unable to resist the onslaught, turned and fled. Having thus scattered the enemy ranks, the powerful monkeys next closed around Ravana and discomfited him by buffeting him on every side and tearing his body with their claws.

दो०—देखि महा मर्कट प्रबल रावन कीन्ह बिचार ।
अंतरहित होइ निमिष महुँ कृत माया बिस्तार ॥ १०० ॥

Finding the monkeys most powerful, Rāvaṇa took thought. Consequently he became invisible and in a moment revealed his illusive power. (100)

छं०—जब कीन्ह तेहिं पाषंड । भए प्रगट जंतु प्रचंड ॥
बेताल भूत पिसाच । कर धरें धनु नाराच ॥ १ ॥
जोगिनि गहें करबाल । एक हाथ मनुज कपाल ॥
करि सद्य सोनित पान । नाचहिं करहिं बहु गान ॥ २ ॥
धरु मारु बोलहिं घोर । रहि पूरि धुनि चहुँ ओर ॥
मुख बाइ धावहिं खान । तब लगे कीस परान ॥ ३ ॥
जहँ जाहिं मर्कट भागि । तहँ बरत देखहिं आगि ॥
भए बिकल बानर भालु । पुनि लाग बरषै बालु ॥ ४ ॥
जहँ तहँ थकित करि कीस । गर्जेउ बहुरि दससीस ॥
लछिमन कपीस समेत । भए सकल बीर अचेत ॥ ५ ॥
हा राम हा रघुनाथ । कहि सुभट मीजहिं हाथ ॥
एहि बिधि सकल बल तोरि । तेहिं कीन्ह कपट बहोरि ॥ ६ ॥

प्रगटेसि बिपुल हनुमान । धाए गहे पाषान ॥
तिन्ह रामु घेरे जाइ । चहुँ दिसि बरूथ बनाइ ॥ ७ ॥
मारहु धरहु जनि जाइ । कटकटहिं पूँछ उठाइ ॥
दहँ दिसि लँगूर बिराज । तेहिं मध्य कोसलराज ॥ ८ ॥

As he let loose his illusive power terrible beings appeared on the scene—goblins, ghosts and ghouls with bows and arrows in their hands. Yoginis holding a sword in one hand and a human skull in another, from which they quaffed draughts of fresh blood, danced and sang many a song. They uttered horrible cries of "Seize and kill!", which echoed all round. With their mouths wide open they rushed to devour the monkeys, who then took to their heels. But whithersoever they turned in their flight they saw a blazing fire. The monkeys and bears were thus in a quandary. Then Rāvana began raining on them a shower of sand. Having thus flabbergasted the monkeys on all sides, the ten-headed monster roared again. All the heroes, including Laksmana and Sugrīva (the king of the monkeys), fainted. The bravest of them wrung their hands, crying "Ah, Rāma! Alas, Raghunātha (Lord of the Raghus)!" Having thus crushed the might of all, he wrought another delusion. He manifested a host of Hanumans, who rushed forward with rocks in their hands and encircled Śrī Rāma in a dense cordon on every side. With uplifted tails and gnashing their teeth they shouted, "Seize and kill him; let him not escape!" Surrounded by their tails on every side, the Lord of Kosala shone in their midst. (1—8)

छं०—तेहिं मध्य कोसलराज सुंदर स्याम तन सोभा लही ।
जनु इंद्रधनुष अनेक की बर बारि तुंग तमालही ॥
प्रभु देखि हरष बिषाद उर सुर बदत जय जय जय करी ।
रघुबीर एकहिं तीर कोपि निमेष महुँ माया हरी ॥ १ ॥
माया बिगत कपि भालु हरषे बिटप गिरि गहि सब फिरे ।
सर निकर छाड़े राम रावन बाहु सिर पुनि महि गिरे ॥
श्रीराम रावन समर चरित अनेक कल्प जो गावहीं ।
सत सेष सारद निगम कबि तेउ तदपि पार न पावहीं ॥ २ ॥

In their midst the King of Kosala with His dark-hued body shone forth as resplendent as a lofty Tamala tree encircled by a magnificent hedge of multitudinous rainbows. The gods experienced in their heart a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow and raised the cries of "Victory! Victory!! Victory!!!" The Hero of Raghu's line now flew into a rage and with a single arrow instantly dispersed the delusion. The delusion having vanished, the monkeys and bears rejoiced and all turned back with trees and rocks in their hands. Srī Rama shot forth a volley of arrows, which once more cut off Rāvana's arms and heads to the ground. If hundreds of Śesas (serpent-gods), Saradas (goddesses of speech), the Vedas and bards were to recite the story of the battle between Srī Rama and Ravana and that too for many cycles together, even they would never be able to do justice to it. (1—2)

दो०—ताके गुन गन कछु कहे जड़मति तुलसीदास ।
जिमि निज बल अनुरूप ते माछी उड़इ अकास ॥ १०१ (क) ॥
काटे सिर भुज बार बहु मरत न भट लंकेस ।
प्रभु क्रीड़त सुर सिद्ध मुनि ब्याकुल देखि कलेस ॥ १०१ (ख) ॥

The dull-witted Tulasidāsa has described only a few salient features of that combat just as a fly wings the sky according to its own capacity. The valiant lord of Lankā could not be killed even though his heads and arms were struck off many times over. It was simply a pastime for the Lord; while the gods, the Siddhas and the sages fidgeted to see the Lord struggling (with him). (101 A.B)

चौ०—काटत बढ़हिं सीस समुदाई । जिमि प्रति लाभ लोभ अधिकाई ॥
मरइ न रिपु श्रम भयउ बिसेषा । राम बिभीषन तन तब देखा ॥ १ ॥
उमा काल मर जाकीं ईछा । सो प्रभु जन कर प्रीति परीछा ॥
सुनु सरबग्य चराचर नायक । प्रनतपाल सुर मुनि सुखदायक ॥ २ ॥
नाभिकुंड पियूष बस याकें । नाथ जिअत रावनु बल ताकें ॥
सुनत बिभीषन बचन कृपाला । हरषि गहे कर बान कराला ॥ ३ ॥
असुभ होन लागे तब नाना । रोवहिं खर सृकाल बहु स्वाना ॥
बोलहिं खग जग आरति हेतू । प्रगट भए नभ जहँ तहँ केतू ॥ ४ ॥
दस दिसि दाह होन अति लागा । भयउ परब बिनु रबि उपरागा ॥
मंदोदरि उर कंपति भारी । प्रतिमा स्रवहिं नयन मग बारी ॥ ५ ॥

No sooner were Rāvaṇa's heads cut off than a fresh crop grew like covetousness, which increases with every new gain. The enemy could not be killed in spite of the prolonged struggle; Śrī Rāma then looked at Vibhīṣaṇa. Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) the Lord whose will causes the death of Death himself thereby tested the devotion of His servant. "Listen, all-wise Ruler of the animate and inanimate creation, Protector of the suppliant, delight of the gods and sages: nectar abides in the depth of his navel; by virtue of it, my lord, Rāvaṇa survives." The All-merciful rejoiced to hear the words of Vibhīṣaṇa and took terrible shafts in His hands. Many ill-omens manifested themselves at that time. Donkeys, jackals and dogs howled in large numbers. Birds too screamed, and thereby portended a world calamity; and comets appeared in every quarter of the heavens. There was a preternatural and unusual glow in the horizon on all sides and a solar eclipse occurred even without the day of the new moon (when the sun and the moon are in conjunction). Mandodarī's heart beat wildly and idols shed tears from their eyes. (1—5)

छं०—प्रतिमा रुदहिं पबिपात नभ अति बात बह डोलति मही ।
बरषहिं बलाहक रुधिर कच रज असुभ अति सक को कही ॥
उतपात अमित बिलोकि नभ सुर बिकल बोलहिं जय जए ।
सुर सभय जानि कृपाल रघुपति चाप सर जोरत भए ॥

Idols wept, lightning flashed with thunderclap in the air, furious winds blew, the earth quaked and the clouds dropped blood, hair and dust; who could recount the great ill-omens? The gods in heaven were dismayed at the sight of the boundless portentous phenomena and shouted "Victory ! Victory !!" And perceiving the distress of the gods the gracious Lord of the Raghus set an arrow to His bow.

दो०—खैंचि सरासन श्रवन लगि छाड़े सर एकतीस ।
रघुनायक सायक चले मानहुँ काल फनीस ॥ १०२ ॥

Drawing the bow-string right up to His ear the Lord of the Raghus let fly thirty-one shafts, which flew forth like the serpents of Death. (102)

चौ०—सायक एक नाभि सर सोषा । अपर लगे भुज सिर करि रोषा ॥
लै सिर बाहु चले नाराचा । सिर भुज हीन रुंड महि नाचा ॥ १ ॥
धरनि धसइ धर धाव प्रचंडा । तब सर हति प्रभु कृत दुइ खंडा ॥
गर्जेउ मरत घोर रव भारी । कहाँ रामु रन हतौं पचारी ॥ २ ॥
डोली भूमि गिरत दसकंधर । छुभित सिंधु सरि दिग्गज भूधर ॥
धरनि परेउ द्वौ खंड बढ़ाई । चापि भालु मर्कट समुदाई ॥ ३ ॥
मंदोदरि आगें भुज सीसा । धरि सर चले जहाँ जगदीसा ॥
प्रबिसे सब निषंग महुँ जाई । देखि सुरन्ह दुंदुभीं बजाई ॥ ४ ॥
तासु तेज समान प्रभु आनन । हरषे देखि संभु चतुरानन ॥
जय जय धुनि पूरी ब्रह्मंडा । जय रघुबीर प्रबल भुजदंडा ॥ ५ ॥
बरषहिं सुमन देव मुनि बृंदा । जय कृपाल जय जयति मुकुंदा ॥ ६ ॥

One arrow sucked up the depths of the navel, while the rest struck his ten heads and twenty arms with impetuosity. The arrows carried off with them all his heads and arms, while the headless and armless trunk danced on the battle-field. The earth sunk under the weight of the trunk as it rushed violently on, till the Lord struck it with His arrow and split it in two. While dying he shouted with a loud and terrible roar: "Where is Rāma, that I may challenge and slay him in battle?" The earth reeled as the ten-headed monster fell; the ocean, the rivers, the elephants guarding the quarters, and the mountains were shaken. Expanding the two halves he dropped to the ground, crushing under their weight a host of bears and monkeys. After depositing the arms and heads before Mandodarī, the darts returned to the Lord of the universe and all found their way back into the quiver. Seeing this, the gods sounded their kettle-drums. His soul entered the Lord's mouth in the form of effulgence. Lord Śambhu and the four-faced Brahmā (the Creator) rejoiced to see the spectacle. The whole universe resounded with cries of "Victory ! Victory !! Glory to the Hero of Raghu's line, mighty of arm !!!" Gods and sages rained down flowers, shouting "Glory, glory to the All-merciful ! Glory to Mukunda (the Bestower of liberation) !!" (1—6)

छं०—जय कृपा कंद मुकुंद द्वंद हरन सरन सुखप्रद प्रभो ।
खल दल बिदारन परम कारन कारुनीक सदा बिभो ॥

सुर सुमन बरषहिं हरष संकुल बाज दुंदुभि गहगही ।
संग्राम अंगन राम अंग अनंग बहु सोभा लही ॥ १ ॥
सिर जटा मुकुट प्रसून बिच बिच अति मनोहर राजहीं ।
जनु नीलगिरि पर तड़ित पटल समेत उडुगन भ्राजहीं ॥
भुजदंड सर कोदंड फेरत रुधिर कन तन अति बने ।
जनु रायमुनीं तमाल पर बैठीं बिपुल सुख आपने ॥ २ ॥

"Glory to You, O Mukunda (the Bestower of liberation), the fountain of mercy, the dispeller of all fear of pairs of opposites, the delight of those who take refuge in You, the torment of the ranks of the wicked, the Prime Cause, the ever compassionate and omnipresent Ruler of all." Full of joy, the gods rained down flowers; their kettle-drums sounded with a crash. On the battle-field Śrī Rāma's limbs displayed the beauty of a number of Cupids. The crown of matted hair on His head, interspersed with most beautiful flowers, gleamed like flashes of lightning on the star-lit peak of a dark mountain. As He stood turning His bow and arrow between His arms, specks of blood adorned His person, like a swarm of Raimuni* birds perched on a Tamāla tree absorbed in their delight.
(1—2)

दो०—कृपादृष्टि करि बृष्टि प्रभु अभय किए सुर बृंद ।
भालु कीस सब हरषे जय सुख धाम मुकुंद ॥ १०३ ॥

With a shower of His gracious glances the Lord dispelled the fears of the gods; and the bears and monkeys all shouted in their joy: "Glory to Mukunda, the abode of Bliss!"
(103)

चौ०—पति सिर देखत मंदोदरी । मुरुछित बिकल धरनि खसि परी ॥
जुबति बृंद रोवत उठि धाईं । तेहि उठाइ रावन पहिं आईं ॥ १ ॥
पति गति देखि ते करहिं पुकारा । छूटे कच नहिं बपुष सँभारा ॥
उर ताड़ना करहिं बिधि नाना । रोवत करहिं प्रताप बखाना ॥ २ ॥
तव बल नाथ डोल नित धरनी । तेज हीन पावक ससि तरनी ॥
सेष कमठ सहि सकहिं न भारा । सो तनु भूमि परेउ भरि छारा ॥ ३ ॥
बरुन कुबेर सुरेस समीरा । रन सन्मुख धरि काहुँ न धीरा ॥
भुजबल जितेहु काल जम साईं । आजु परेहु अनाथ की नाईं ॥ ४ ॥
जगत बिदित तुम्हारि प्रभुताई । सुत परिजन बल बरनि न जाई ॥
राम बिमुख अस हाल तुम्हारा । रहा न कोउ कुल रोवनिहारा ॥ ५ ॥
तव बस बिधि प्रपंच सब नाथा । सभय दिसिप नित नावहिं माथा ॥
अब तव सिर भुज जंबुक खाहीं । राम बिमुख यह अनुचित नाहीं ॥ ६ ॥
काल बिबस पति कहा न माना । अग जग नाथु मनुज करि जाना ॥ ७ ॥

The moment Mandodarī (Rāvaṇa's principal spouse) saw her lord's heads she fainted in her grief and dropped to the ground. His other wives too

* A tiny bird deep red in colour.

sprang up and rushed to the spot weeping; lifting up and supporting Mandodarī they all arrived where Rāvaṇa's remains lay. Seeing their lord's condition they set up a shriek; their hair flew loose and they became oblivious of their body. Wildly beating their bosom and weeping, they recounted his glory. "At your might, my Lord, the earth ever shook; fire, the moon and the sun stood obscure before your splendour. Even Sesa (the serpent-god) and the divine Tortoise could not bear the weight of your body, which is now lying on the ground soiled with dust. Varuna (the god presiding over the waters), Kubera (the god of riches), Indra (the lord of the celestials) and the wind-god—none of these ever had the courage to confront you in battle. By the might of your arm, my lord, you conquered Death as well as Yama (the god who punishes evil-doers in the other world); yet you lie today like a forlorn creature. Your greatness is known all the world over; even your sons and kinsmen possessed untold strength. Hostility with Rāma has, however, reduced you to such a plight: not one of your stock is left to lament over your death. The whole of God's creation, my lord, was under your control; the frightened regents of the eight quarters ever bowed their heads to you. But now jackals feast on your heads and arms, a fate in no way undeserved by an enemy of Srī Rāma. Doomed to death, my lord, you heeded not my words, and took the Ruler of all animate and inanimate beings for an ordinary mortal. (1—7)

छं०—जान्यो मनुज करि दनुज कानन दहन पावक हरि स्वयं।
जेहि नमत सिव ब्रह्मादि सुर पिय भजेहु नहिं करुनामयं॥
आजन्म ते परद्रोह रत पापौघमय तव तनु अयं।
तुम्हहू दियो निज धाम राम नमामि ब्रह्म निरामयं॥

"You took for a mere man Srī Hari Himself, a veritable fire to consume the forest of the demon race, and did not adore the All-merciful, to whom, my beloved spouse, Lord Siva, Brahma (the Creator) and other gods do homage. This body of yours had taken delight from its very birth in harming others and was a sink of multitudinous sins; yet Śrī Rama has absorbed you in His own being! I bow to Him, the immutable Brahma.

दो०—अहह नाथ रघुनाथ सम कृपासिंधु नहिं आन।
जोगि बृंद दुर्लभ गति तोहि दीन्हि भगवान॥ १०४॥

"Ah, my lord! there is none else so gracious as the divine Srī Rama (the Lord of the Raghus), who bestowed on you a state which is difficult even for the Yogīs to attain." (104)

चौ०—मंदोदरी बचन सुनि काना। सुर मुनि सिद्ध सबन्हि सुख माना॥
अज महेस नारद सनकादी। जे मुनिबर परमारथबादी॥ १॥
भरि लोचन रघुपतिहि निहारी। प्रेम मगन सब भए सुखारी॥
रुदन करत देखीं सब नारी। गयउ बिभीषनु मन दुख भारी॥ २॥
बंधु दसा बिलोकि दुख कीन्हा। तब प्रभु अनुजहि आयसु दीन्हा॥
लछिमन तेहि बहु बिधि समुझायो। बहुरि बिभीषन प्रभु पहिं आयो॥ ३॥

कृपादृष्टि प्रभु ताहि बिलोका । करहु क्रिया परिहरि सब सोका ॥
कीन्हि क्रिया प्रभु आयसु मानी । बिधिवत देस काल जियँ जानी ॥ ४ ॥

The gods, sages and Siddhas, all rejoiced to hear Mandodarī's words. Brahmā, the great Lord Śiva, Nārada, Sanaka and his three brothers (Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra) and all other great sages who taught the highest truth (the identity of the individual soul with the supreme Spirit) were all overwhelmed with emotion as they feasted their eyes on the Lord of the Raghus, and felt supremely gratified. Seeing all the women making lamentation Vibhīsana approached them with a very heavy heart and was grieved to see his brother's condition. The Lord thereupon gave an order to His younger brother, Lakṣmaṇa, who consoled him in many ways. Then Vibhīṣaṇa returned to his lord, who looked upon him with an eye of compassion and said, "Abandon all sorrow and perform the funeral rites." In obedience to the Lord's command he celebrated the obsequies, strictly observing the scriptural ordinance and with due regard to time and place. (1—4)

दो०—मंदोदरी आदि सब देइ तिलांजलि ताहि ।
भवन गईं रघुपति गुन गन बरनत मन माहि ॥ १०५ ॥

After offering to the deceased handfuls of water and sesamum seeds (for the propitiation of his soul) Mandodarī and all the other queens returned to their palace, recounting to themselves the host of excellences of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). (105)

चौ०—आइ बिभीषन पुनि सिरु नायो । कृपासिंधु तब अनुज बोलायो ॥
तुम्ह कपीस अंगद नल नीला । जामवंत मारुति नयसीला ॥ १ ॥
सब मिलि जाहु बिभीषन साथा । सारेहु तिलक कहेउ रघुनाथा ॥
पिता बचन मैं नगर न आवउँ । आपु सरिस कपि अनुज पठावउँ ॥ २ ॥
तुरत चले कपि सुनि प्रभु बचना । कीन्ही जाइ तिलक की रचना ॥
सादर सिंहासन बैठारी । तिलक सारि अस्तुति अनुसारी ॥ ३ ॥
जोरि पानि सबहीं सिर नाए । सहित बिभीषन प्रभु पहिं आए ॥
तब रघुबीर बोलि कपि लीन्हे । कहि प्रिय बचन सुखी सब कीन्हे ॥ ४ ॥

(After finishing the obsequies) Vibhīṣaṇa came and bowed his head once more. The All-merciful then called His younger brother. "Do you and Sugrīva (the lord of the monkeys) as well as Angada, Nala and Nīla, with Jāmbavān and Hanumān (the son of the wind-god), sagacious as you are, all of you accompany Vibhīsana and make arrangements for his coronation," said the Lord of the Raghus "In deference to my father's command I may not enter a town, but send the monkeys and my younger brother, who are as good as myself." On hearing the Lord's command the monkeys proceeded at once and arriving in the town made preparations for the installation. With due reverence they seated him on the throne and applying a sacred mark on his forehead (as a token of sovereignty) they glorified him. Nay, joining their palms, they all bowed their head to him; and then

with Vibhīṣaṇa they returned to the Lord. The Hero of Raghu's line next called the monkeys together and gratified them all by addressing kind words to them. (1—4)

छं०—कपि सुखी कहि बानी सुधा सम बल तुम्हारें रिपु हयो ।
पायो बिभीषन राज तिहुँ पुर जसु तुम्हारो नित नयो ॥
मोहि सहित सुभ कीरति तुम्हारी परम प्रीति जो गाइहैं ।
संसार सिंधु अपार पार प्रयास बिनु नर पाइहैं ॥

The Lord cheered them by speaking to them words sweet as nectar: "It is by your might that the enemy has been killed and Vibhīṣaṇa has got the kingdom (of Laṅkā); while your glory will remain ever fresh in all the three spheres. Men who sing your blessed glory along with Mine shall easily cross the boundless ocean of mundane existence."

दो०—प्रभु के बचन श्रवन सुनि नहिं अघाहिं कपि पुंज ।
बार बार सिर नावहिं गहहिं सकल पद कंज ॥ १०६ ॥

The monkey host would never feel sated with listening to the Lord's words. They all bowed their head and clasped His lotus feet again and again. (106)

चौ०—पुनि प्रभु बोलि लियउ हनुमाना । लंका जाहु कहेउ भगवाना ॥
समाचार जानकिहि सुनावहु । तासु कुसल लै तुम्ह चलि आवहु ॥ १ ॥
तब हनुमंत नगर महुँ आए । सुनि निसिचरीं निसाचर धाए ॥
बहु प्रकार तिन्ह पूजा कीन्ही । जनकसुता देखाइ पुनि दीन्ही ॥ २ ॥
दूरिहि ते प्रनाम कपि कीन्हा । रघुपति दूत जानकीं चीन्हा ॥
कहहु तात प्रभु कृपानिकेता । कुसल अनुज कपि सेन समेता ॥ ३ ॥
सब बिधि कुसल कोसलाधीसा । मातु समर जीत्यो दससीसा ॥
अबिचल राजु बिभीषन पायो । सुनि कपि बचन हरष उर छायो ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord then called Hanumān. "Go to Laṅkā", said the Almighty, "and telling Janaka's Daughter all that has happened return with the news of her welfare." Thereupon Hanumān entered the city and on hearing of his arrival demons and demonesses ran to meet him. They did him all kinds of homage and thereafter conducted him into the presence of Janaka's Daughter. Hanumān made obeisance to Her from a respectable distance, and Janaka's Daughter recognized him as Śrī Rāma's own messenger. "Tell me, dear son, if my gracious lord is doing well with His younger brother and the monkey host." "All is well with the Lord of Kosala. Mother, the ten-headed monster has been conquered in battle, while Vibhīsaṇa has attained everlasting dominion (that will endure till the end of this Kalpa)." Her heart was filled with joy when She heard the monkey's words. (1—4)

छं०—अति हरष मन तन पुलक लोचन सजल कह पुनि पुनि रमा ।
का देउँ तोहि त्रैलोक महुँ कपि किमपि नहिं बानी समा ॥

सुनु मातु मैं पायो अखिल जग राजु आजु न संसयं ।
रन जीति रिपुदल बंधु जुत पस्यामि राममनामयं ॥

Her soul was overjoyed, a thrill ran through Her body and with eyes full of tears Rama (Sīta) said again and again, "What can I give you? There is nothing in all the three worlds equal in value to this information." "Listen, mother: today I have doubtless attained the sovereignty of the entire creation when I find Srī Rama safe and sound with His brother after conquering the enemy's ranks on the battle-field."

दो०—सुनु सुत सदगुन सकल तव हृदयँ बसहुँ हनुमंत ।
सानुकूल कोसलपति रहहुँ समेत अनंत ॥ १०७ ॥

"Listen, Hanumān, my son: may all commendable virtues abide in your heart and may the Lord of Kosala with Ananta (Laksmana) be ever gracious to you. (107)

चौ०—अब सोइ जतन करहु तुम्ह ताता । देखौं नयन स्याम मृदु गाता ॥
तब हनुमान राम पहिं जाई । जनकसुता कै कुसल सुनाई ॥ १ ॥
सुनि संदेसु भानुकुलभूषन । बोलि लिए जुबराज बिभीषन ॥
मारुतसुत के संग सिधावहु । सादर जनकसुतहि लै आवहु ॥ २ ॥
तुरतहिं सकल गए जहँ सीता । सेवहिं सब निसिचरीं बिनीता ॥
बेगि बिभीषन तिन्हहि सिखायो । तिन्ह बहु बिधि मज्जन करवायो ॥ ३ ॥
बहु प्रकार भूषन पहिराए । सिबिका रुचिर साजि पुनि ल्याए ॥
ता पर हरषि चढ़ी बैदेही । सुमिरि राम सुखधाम सनेही ॥ ४ ॥
बेतपानि रच्छक चहु पासा । चले सकल मन परम हुलासा ॥
देखन भालु कीस सब आए । रच्छक कोपि निवारन धाए ॥ ५ ॥
कह रघुबीर कहा मम मानहु । सीतहि सखा पयादें आनहु ॥
देखहुँ कपि जननी की नाईं । बिहसि कहा रघुनाथ गोसाईं ॥ ६ ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन भालु कपि हरषे । नभ ते सुरन्ह सुमन बहु बरषे ॥
सीता प्रथम अनल महुँ राखी । प्रगट कीन्हि चह अंतर साखी ॥ ७ ॥

"Now, my dear son, devise some means whereby I may behold with my own eyes the tender swarthy limbs of my lord." Then Hanuman returned to Srī Rama and apprised Him of Sītā's welfare. On hearing Her tidings the Ornament of the solar race called Prince Angada and Vibhīsana. "Both of you accompany the son of the wind-god and respectfully escort Janaka's Daughter here." Forthwith all went to the place where Sīta was and found a whole host of demonesses waiting on Her in all humility. Vibhīsana gave prompt instructions to the demonesses, who washed Her body in all possible ways. They also decked Her with ornaments of every description and then brought a beautiful palanquin duly equipped. Videha's Daughter gladly mounted it with Her thoughts fixed on the all-blissful Rama, Her loving lord

Guards marched on all four sides, staves in hand; they were all supremely delighted at heart. The bears and monkeys all came to have a look at Her; but the guards darted in a fury to keep them back. Said the Hero of Raghu's line, "Follow my advice, Vibhīsana and bring Sītā on foot." "Let the monkeys gaze on Her as they would on their own mother," smilingly added the Almighty Lord of the Raghus. The bears and monkeys rejoiced to hear the Lord's words, while from the heavens the gods rained down flowers in profusion. Sītā (it will be remembered) had been previously lodged in fire (*vide Aranyakanda* XXIII. 1-2); Srī Rāma (the inner Witness of all) now sought to bring Her back to light. (1—7)

दो०—तेहि कारन करुनानिधि कहे कछुक दुर्बाद ।
सुनत जातुधानीं सब लागीं करै बिषाद ॥ १०८ ॥

It was for this reason that the All-merciful addressed some reproachful words to Her. On hearing them the demon ladies (who had accompanied Her) all began to lament. (108)

चौ०—प्रभु के बचन सीस धरि सीता । बोली मन क्रम बचन पुनीता ॥
लछिमन होहु धरम के नेगी । पावक प्रगट करहु तुम्ह बेगी ॥ १ ॥
सुनि लछिमन सीता कै बानी । बिरह बिबेक धरम निति सानी ॥
लोचन सजल जोरि कर दोऊ । प्रभु सन कछु कहि सकत न ओऊ ॥ २ ॥
देखि राम रुख लछिमन धाए । पावक प्रगटि काठ बहु लाए ॥
पावक प्रबल देखि बैदेही । हृदयँ हरष नहिं भय कछु तेही ॥ ३ ॥
जौं मन बच क्रम मम उर माहीं । तजि रघुबीर आन गति नाहीं ॥
तौ कृसानु सब कै गति जाना । मो कहुँ होउ श्रीखंड समाना ॥ ४ ॥

Sītā, however, bowed to the Lord's command—pure as She was in thought, word and deed—and said, "Laksmana, help me as a priest in the performance of this sacred rite and quickly kindle me a fire." When Laksmana heard Sītā's words, full of anguish caused by separation (from Her lord) and imbued with critical insight, piety and prudence, tears rushed to his eyes and he joined his palms in prayer; but he too could not speak a word to the Lord. Reading Śrī Rāma's tacit approval in His looks, however, Laksmana ran and after kindling a fire brought plenty of firewood. Videha's Daughter rejoiced at heart to perceive the blazing fire and did not flinch at all. "If in thought, word and deed I have never set my heart on anyone other than the Hero of Raghu's line, may this fire, which knows the working of all minds, become cool like sandal-paste to me." (1—4)

छं०—श्रीखंड सम पावक प्रबेस कियो सुमिरि प्रभु मैथिली ।
जय कोसलेस महेस बंदित चरन रति अति निर्मली ॥
प्रतिबिंब अरु लौकिक कलंक प्रचंड पावक महुँ जरे ।
प्रभु चरित काहुँ न लखे नभ सुर सिद्ध मुनि देखहिं खरे ॥ १ ॥

धरि रूप पावक पानि गहि श्री सत्य श्रुति जग बिदित जो ।
जिमि छीरसागर इंदिरा रामहि समर्पी आनि सो ॥
सो राम बाम बिभाग राजति रुचिर अति सोभा भली ।
नव नील नीरज निकट मानहुँ कनक पंकज की कली ॥ २ ॥

With Her thoughts fixed on the Lord, the Princess of Mithilā entered the flames as though they were cool like sandal-paste, crying "Glory to the Lord of Kosala, whose feet are adored by the great Lord Śiva with the purest devotion !" Both Her shadow-form as well as the social stigma (occasioned by Her forced residence at Rāvaṇa's) were consumed in the blazing fire; but no one could know the secret of the Lord's doings. Even the gods, Siddhas and sages stood gazing in the air. Fire assumed a bodily form and, taking by the hand the real Śrī (Sītā), celebrated alike in the Vedas and the world, escorted and presented Her to Śrī Rāma even as the Ocean of milk presented Goddess Indirā (Lakṣmī) to Lord Viṣṇu. Standing on the left side of Śrī Rāma, She shone resplendent in Her exquisite beauty like the bud of a gold lily beside a fresh blue lotus. (1—2)

दो०—बरषहिं सुमन हरषि सुर बाजहिं गगन निसान ।
गावहिं किंनर सुरबधू नाचहिं चढ़ीं बिमान ॥ १०९ (क) ॥
जनकसुता समेत प्रभु सोभा अमित अपार ।
देखि भालु कपि हरषे जय रघुपति सुख सार ॥ १०९ (ख) ॥

The gods in their delight rained down flowers and kettle-drums sounded in the air. The Kinnaras sang their melodies and the celestial nymphs danced, all mounted on their aerial cars. The beauty of the Lord reunited with Janaka's Daughter was beyond all measure and bound. The bears and monkeys rejoiced at the sight and shouted "Glory to the Lord of the Raghus, the essence of bliss." (109 A-B)

चौ०—तब रघुपति अनुसासन पाई । मातलि चलेउ चरन सिरु नाई ॥
आए देव सदा स्वारथी । बचन कहहिं जनु परमारथी ॥ १ ॥
दीन बंधु दयाल रघुराया । देव कीन्हि देवन्ह पर दाया ॥
बिस्व द्रोह रत यह खल कामी । निज अघ गयउ कुमारगगामी ॥ २ ॥
तुम्ह समरूप ब्रह्म अबिनासी । सदा एकरस सहज उदासी ॥
अकल अगुन अज अनघ अनामय । अजित अमोघसक्ति करुनामय ॥ ३ ॥
मीन कमठ सूकर नरहरी । बामन परसुराम बपु धरी ॥
जब जब नाथ सुरन्ह दुखु पायो । नाना तनु धरि तुम्हइँ नसायो ॥ ४ ॥
यह खल मलिन सदा सुरद्रोही । काम लोभ मद रत अति कोही ॥
अधम सिरोमनि तव पद पावा । यह हमरें मन बिसमय आवा ॥ ५ ॥
हम देवता परम अधिकारी । स्वारथ रत प्रभु भगति बिसारी ॥
भव प्रबाहँ संतत हम परे । अब प्रभु पाहि सरन अनुसरे ॥ ६ ॥

Then, with the permission of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), Mātali (Indra's charioteer) left (for his abode in heaven) after bowing his head at the Lord's feet. Now came the gods, ever alive to their own selfish interests, and spoke words as though they were seekers of the highest truth: "Friend of the meek, gracious and divine Lord of the Raghus, You have shown mercy to the gods. This sensual wretch, who took delight in doing mischief to the whole world and trod the evil way, has perished through his own sins. You are alike to all, the imperishable Brahma, ever unchangeable, impartial by nature, integral, devoid of material properties, unborn, sinless, immutable, invincible, unfailing in power, and full of compassion. It was You who assumed the form of a fish, a tortoise, a boar, a man-lion and a dwarf as well as that of Paraśurāma. Whenever, O Lord, the gods have been in trouble, You have put an end to it by appearing in one form or other. This impure wretch, a perpetual enemy of the gods, was given up to lust, greed and vanity, and very passionate too. That even this vilest creature attained Your state is a marvel to us. We gods are supremely qualified (for the highest state); yet, devoted as we are to our own selfish ends, we have forgotten the worship of our lord and are ever involved in the flood of birth and death. Now redeem us, O Lord, since we have sought shelter in You." (1—6)

दो०—करि बिनती सुर सिद्ध सब रहे जहँ तहँ कर जोरि।
अति सप्रेम तन पुलकि बिधि अस्तुति करत बहोरि॥ ११०॥

Having thus made their supplication, the gods and Siddhas all remained standing where they were with joined palms. Then, thrilling all over with excess of love, Brahmā (the Creator) commenced his prayer. (110)

छं०—जय राम सदा सुखधाम हरे। रघुनायक सायक चाप धरे॥
भव बारन दारन सिंह प्रभो। गुन सागर नागर नाथ बिभो॥ १॥
तन काम अनेक अनूप छबी। गुन गावत सिद्ध मुनींद्र कबी॥
जसु पावन रावन नाग महा। खगनाथ जथा करि कोप गहा॥ २॥
जन रंजन भंजन सोक भयं। गतक्रोध सदा प्रभु बोधमयं॥
अवतार उदार अपार गुनं। महि भार बिभंजन ग्यानघनं॥ ३॥
अज ब्यापकमेकमनादि सदा। करुनाकर राम नमामि मुदा॥
रघुबंस बिभूषन दूषन हा। कृत भूप बिभीषन दीन रहा॥ ४॥
गुन ग्यान निधान अमान अजं। नित राम नमामि बिभुं बिरजं॥
भुजदंड प्रचंड प्रताप बलं। खल बृंद निकंद महा कुसलं॥ ५॥
बिनु कारन दीन दयाल हितं। छबि धाम नमामि रमा सहितं॥
भव तारन कारन काज परं। मन संभव दारुन दोष हरं॥ ६॥
सर चाप मनोहर त्रोन धरं। जलजारुन लोचन भूपबरं॥
सुख मंदिर सुंदर श्रीरमनं। मद मार मुधा ममता समनं॥ ७॥

अनवद्य अखंड न गोचर गो। सबरूप सदा सब होइ न गो ॥
इति बेद बदंति न दंतकथा। रबि आतप भिन्नमभिन्न जथा ॥ ८ ॥
कृतकृत्य बिभो सब बानर ए। निरखंति तवानन सादर ए ॥
धिग जीवन देव सरीर हरे। तव भक्ति बिना भव भूलि परे ॥ ९ ॥
अब दीनदयाल दया करिऐ। मति मोरि बिभेदकरी हरिऐ ॥
जेहि ते बिपरीत क्रिया करिऐ। दुख सो सुख मानि सुखी चरिऐ ॥ १० ॥
खल खंडन मंडन रम्य छमा। पद पंकज सेवित संभु उमा ॥
नृप नायक दे बरदानमिदं। चरनांबुज प्रेमु सदा सुभदं ॥ ११ ॥

"Glory to You, O Rāma, perpetual abode of bliss, O Hari (the reliever of suffering), O Chief of the Raghus, bearing a bow and arrows ! Lord, You are a veritable lion to tear in pieces the elephant of mundane existence, and an ocean of virtues, my clever and omnipresent Master. In Your person stands concentrated the incomparable beauty of a myriad Cupids; Siddhas, as well as the greatest of sages and bards sing Your praises. Your glory is not only sacred, it purifies all; in Your wrath You seized Ravana even as Garuda (the king of the birds) might seize a huge serpent. Delight of devotees, and dispeller of their grief and fear, You are ever unmoved by passion, and are all-intelligence, my lord. Your descent on the mortal plane is beneficent and full of untold virtues: You come to relieve Earth's burdens and Your manifestations on earth are wisdom personified. (Though descended on earth,) You are ever unborn, omnipresent, one (without a second) and beginningless. I gladly bow to You, O Rama, fountain of mercy ! Ornament of Raghu's race and Slayer of demon Dusana (Ravana's Cousin), You eradicate the faults of Your devotees and made Vibhīsana, destitute as he was, the Ruler of Lanka. Storehouse of virtue and wisdom and beyond all measure, You have no pride in You and are unborn, all-pervading and free from the taint of Maya; I constantly adore You, Rāma. Terrible is the glory and might of Your arms, which are deft in exterminating the hordes of the impious. Compassionate and friendly to the poor without any ostensible reason and a reservoir of beauty, I adore You along with Ramā (Sītā). Deliverer from the rounds of birth and death, You are beyond both cause (Prakrti) and effect (the phenomenal universe) and eradicate the awful weaknesses of the (devotee's) mind. Armed with a charming bow, arrows and quiver, You have eyes resembling a red lotus. A paragon of kings, home of bliss, Lakṣmī's lovely Consort, subduer of arrogance, lust and the false sense of mineness, You are free from blemish, integral and imperceptible to the senses. Though manifest in all forms, You never transmuted Yourself into them all: so declare the Vedas; it is no mere gossip, as will be clear from the analogy of the sun and the sunshine, which are different and yet identical. Blessed are all these monkeys, O ubiquitous Lord, who reverently gaze on Your countenance; while accursed, O Hari, is our (so-called) immortal existence and our ethereal bodies in that we lack in devotion to You and are lost in worldly pleasures. Now show Your mercy to me, compassionate as You are to the afflicted, and take away my differentiating sense (which makes the world appear as apart from You), which leads me to wrong action and deluded by which I pass my days in merriment, mistaking woe for

happiness. Destroyer of the wicked and lovely jewel of the earth, Your lotus feet are adored even by Sambhu (Lord Siva) and Umā (Goddess Pārvatī). O King of kings, grant me this boon that I may cherish loving devotion to Your lotus feet, which is a perennial source of blessings." (1–11)

दो०—बिनय कीन्हि चतुरानन प्रेम पुलक अति गात।
सोभासिंधु बिलोकत लोचन नहीं अघात॥ १११॥

As the four-faced Brahmā thus prayed, his body was deeply thrilled with emotion. And his eyes knew no satiation as they gazed on the Ocean of beauty. (111)

चौ०—तेहि अवसर दसरथ तहँ आए। तनय बिलोकि नयन जल छाए॥
अनुज सहित प्रभु बंदन कीन्हा। आसिरबाद पिताँ तब दीन्हा॥ १॥
तात सकल तव पुन्य प्रभाऊ। जीत्यों अजय निसाचर राऊ॥
सुनि सुत बचन प्रीति अति बाढ़ी। नयन सलिल रोमावलि ठाढ़ी॥ २॥
रघुपति प्रथम प्रेम अनुमाना। चितइ पितहि दीन्हेउ दृढ़ ग्याना॥
ताते उमा मोच्छ नहिं पायो। दसरथ भेद भगति मन लायो॥ ३॥
सगुनोपासक मोच्छ न लेहीं। तिन्ह कहुँ राम भगति निज देहीं॥
बार बार करि प्रभुहि प्रनामा। दसरथ हरषि गए सुरधामा॥ ४॥

That very moment King Dasaratha appeared on the scene (in his celestial form); his eyes were flooded with tears as he beheld his son (Śrī Rāma). The Lord and His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) made obeisance and the father in his turn gave them his blessing. "Dear father, it was all due to your religious merit that I conquered the invincible demon king." Dasaratha was overwhelmed with emotion when he heard his son's words; tears rushed to his eyes again and the hair on his body stood erect. The Lord of the Raghus understood that His father bore the same affection for Him as he did before; He, therefore, looked at His father and bestowed on him solid wisdom. Umā, (continues Lord Siva,) Dasaratha did not attain final beatitude for this simple reason that he set his heart on Devotion while maintaining his separate identity. Worshippers of God in His embodied form spurn final beatitude: to them Śrī Rāma vouchsafes devotion to His own person. Having prostrated himself before the Lord again and again, Dasaratha joyfully returned to his abode in heaven. (1–4)

दो०—अनुज जानकी सहित प्रभु कुसल कोसलाधीस।
सोभा देखि हरषि मन अस्तुति कर सुर ईस॥ ११२॥

Perceiving the Almighty Lord of Kosala safe and sound with His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Janaka's Daughter, and beholding their beauty, Indra (the Lord of the celestials) began extolling Him with a cheerful heart:— (112)

छं०—जय राम सोभा धाम। दायक प्रनत बिश्राम॥
धृत त्रोन बर सर चाप। भुजदंड प्रबल प्रताप॥ १॥

जय दूषनारि खरारि । मर्दन निसाचर धारि ॥
यह दुष्ट मारेउ नाथ । भए देव सकल सनाथ ॥ २ ॥
जय हरन धरनी भार । महिमा उदार अपार ॥
जय रावनारि कृपाल । किए जातुधान बिहाल ॥ ३ ॥
लंकेस अति बल गर्ब । किए बस्य सुर गंधर्ब ॥
मुनि सिद्ध नर खग नाग । हठि पंथ सब कें लाग ॥ ४ ॥
परद्रोह रत अति दुष्ट । पायो सो फलु पापिष्ट ॥
अब सुनहु दीन दयाल । राजीव नयन बिसाल ॥ ५ ॥
मोहि रहा अति अभिमान । नहिं कोउ मोहि समान ॥
अब देखि प्रभु पद कंज । गत मान प्रद दुख पुंज ॥ ६ ॥
कोउ ब्रह्म निर्गुन ध्याव । अब्यक्त जेहि श्रुति गाव ॥
मोहि भाव कोसल भूप । श्रीराम सगुन सरूप ॥ ७ ॥
बैदेहि अनुज समेत । मम हृदयँ करहु निकेत ॥
मोहि जानिए निज दास । दे भक्ति रमानिवास ॥ ८ ॥

"Glory to Śrī Rāma, beauty personified, the bestower of peace on the suppliant, equipped with an excellent bow, arrows and quiver and triumphing in His mighty strength of arm. Glory to the Slayer of Dūṣaṇa and Khara and the crusher of the demon hordes ! Now that You have disposed of this wretch, my lord, all the gods enjoy full security. Glory to the Reliever of Earth's burden, whose greatness is beneficent and unbounded. Glory to the all-merciful Slayer of Rāvaṇa, who reduced the demon host to a miserable plight. Outrageous was the pride of Rāvaṇa (the lord of Lankā), who had subdued even gods and Gandharvas (the celestial musicians). Nay, he relentlessly pursued sages, the Siddhas, human beings, birds and Nāgas alike. He took delight in injuring others and was most wicked; the vile sinner has now reaped the fruit of his misdeeds. Now listen, my lord, possessed of eyes as large as the lotus and compassionate to the humble: my pride was inordinate; I accounted no one as equal to me. At the sight of Your lotus feet, however, my pride, which entailed much woe, has taken leave of me. Some people meditate on the attributeless Brahma (the Absolute), whom the Vedas declare as unmanifest. What attracts my mind, however, is the Supreme embodied as Śrī Rāma, King of Kosala. Together with Videha's Daughter and Your younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa), therefore, pray abide in my heart; and, recognizing me as Your own servant, bless me with devotion, O Abode of Ramā (Lakṣmī). (1—8)

छं०—दे भक्ति रमानिवास त्रास हरन सरन सुखदायकं ।
सुख धाम राम नमामि काम अनेक छबि रघुनायकं ॥
सुर बृंद रंजन द्वंद भंजन मनुजतनु अतुलितबलं ।
ब्रह्मादि संकर सेब्य राम नमामि करुना कोमलं ॥

"Grant me devotion to Your feet, O Abode of Ramā, dispeller of fear and solace of the suppliant. I adore You, O blissful Rāma, the Lord of the Raghus, possessing the beauty of a myriad Cupids. Delight of the hosts of heaven, Queller of contrary experiences (like joy and sorrow etc.), appearing in a human form possessing incomparable strength, worthy of adoration even to Brahmā (the Creator) and Śankara, O Rāma, I bow to You, tender as You are through compassion.

दो०—अब करि कृपा बिलोकि मोहि आयसु देहु कृपाल ।
काह करौं सुनि प्रिय बचन बोले दीनदयाल ॥ ११३ ॥

"Now cast Your gracious look on me, O merciful Lord, and command me what to do." Hearing these polite words, Śrī Rāma, who is noted for His compassion to the meek, enjoined him as follows:— (113)

चौ०—सुनु सुरपति कपि भालु हमारे । परे भूमि निसिचरन्हि जे मारे ॥
मम हित लागि तजे इन्ह प्राना । सकल जिआउ सुरेस सुजाना ॥ १ ॥
सुनु खगेस प्रभु कै यह बानी । अति अगाध जानहिं मुनि ग्यानी ॥
प्रभु सक त्रिभुअन मारि जिआई । केवल सक्रहि दीन्हि बड़ाई ॥ २ ॥
सुधा बरषि कपि भालु जिआए । हरषि उठे सब प्रभु पहिं आए ॥
सुधाबृष्टि भै दुहु दल ऊपर । जिए भालु कपि नहिं रजनीचर ॥ ३ ॥
रामाकार भए तिन्ह के मन । मुक्त भए छूटे भव बंधन ॥
सुर अंसिक सब कपि अरु रीछा । जिए सकल रघुपति कीं ईछा ॥ ४ ॥
राम सरिस को दीन हितकारी । कीन्हे मुकुत निसाचर झारी ॥
खल मल धाम काम रत रावन । गति पाई जो मुनिबर पाव न ॥ ५ ॥

"Listen, King of the gods: our monkeys and bears, those that were killed by the demons, are lying on the ground. They have laid down their lives in my service: therefore, restore them all to life, O wise lord of the celestials." Listen, O king of the birds: (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi,) these words of the Lord are profoundly mysterious; only enlightened sages can apprehend them. The Lord Himself can wipe out the inhabitants of the three spheres and bring them back to life; He wished only to give Indra honour. By a shower of nectar the latter restored the monkeys and bears to life. They all arose with delight and betook themselves to the Lord. Although the shower of nectar promiscuously fell on the dead of both the armies, it is the bears and monkeys alone that returned to life, but not the demons. Their mind was absorbed in the thought of Śrī Rāma when they gave up the ghost; that is why they got liberated and were rid of the bonds of mundane existence. As for the monkeys and bears, they were all part manifestations of the gods (who are all immortal): hence they all came to life by the will of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). Is there anyone so kind to the afflicted as Śrī Rāma, who liberated the whole demon host? Even the wicked Rāvaṇa, who was a sink of impurities and given up to sensuality, attained to an exalted state which is withheld even from the greatest of sages. (1–5)

दो०—सुमन बरषि सब सुर चले चढ़ि चढ़ि रुचिर बिमान ।
देखि सुअवसर प्रभु पहिं आयउ संभु सुजान ॥ ११४ (क) ॥
परम प्रीति कर जोरि जुग नलिन नयन भरि बारि ।
पुलकित तन गदगद गिराँ बिनय करत त्रिपुरारि ॥ ११४ (ख) ॥

After raining down flowers the gods mounted each his own shining aerial car and departed. Finding it a welcome opportunity the all-wise Śambhu (Lord Śiva) arrived in the presence of the Lord. Most lovingly, with joined palms, His lotus eyes full of tears and the hair on His body standing erect, the Slayer of the demon Tripura made the following supplication with choked voice:— (114 A-B)

छं०—मामभिरक्षय रघुकुल नायक । धृत बर चाप रुचिर कर सायक ॥
मोह महा घन पटल प्रभंजन । संसय बिपिन अनल सुर रंजन ॥ १ ॥
अगुन सगुन गुन मंदिर सुंदर । भ्रम तम प्रबल प्रताप दिवाकर ॥
काम क्रोध मद गज पंचानन । बसहु निरंतर जन मन कानन ॥ २ ॥
बिषय मनोरथ पुंज कंज वन । प्रवल तुषार उदार पार मन ॥
भव बारिधि मंदर परमं दर । बारय तारय संसृति दुस्तर ॥ ३ ॥
स्याम गात राजीव बिलोचन । दीन बंधु प्रनतारति मोचन ॥
अनुज जानकी सहित निरंतर । बसहु राम नृप मम उर अंतर ॥ ४ ॥
मुनि रंजन महि मंडल मंडन । तुलसिदास प्रभु त्रास बिखंडन ॥ ५ ॥

"Save me, Chief of Raghu's line, bearing an excellent bow and shining arrows in Your hands. A furious wind to disperse the mass of clouds in the shape of colossal ignorance, a fire to consume the forest of doubts and delight of the gods, You are both with and without attributes a shrine of virtues and most lovely to look at; nay, You are a burning midday sun to scatter the darkness of delusion. A veritable lion to kill the elephants of lust, anger and pride, pray, constantly abide in the forest of the devotee's mind. A severe frost to blast the lotus bed of sensual desires, You are generous beyond conception. Nay, playing the role of Mount Mandara for churning the ocean of mundane existence, kindly stave off my fear (of birth and death) and transport me across the stormy ocean of mundane existence. Possessed of a swarthy form with lotus eyes, befriender of the meek, reliever of the suppliant's agony, take up Your abode in my heart for ever, O King Rāma, with Your younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Janaka's Daughter, O Delight of the sages, Jewel of the terrestrial globe, lord of Tulasīdāsa and destroyer of fear (1—5)

दो०—नाथ जबहिं कोसलपुरीं होइहि तिलक तुम्हार ।
कृपासिंधु मैं आउब देखन चरित उदार ॥ ११५ ॥

"When, my lord, Your Coronation takes place at Kosalapura (Ayodhya), I will come to witness Your benevolent role, O Ocean of Mercy !" (115)

चौ०—करि बिनती जब संभु सिधाए। तब प्रभु निकट बिभीषनु आए॥
नाइ चरन सिरु कह मृदु बानी। बिनय सुनहु प्रभु सारँगपानी॥ १॥
सकुल सदल प्रभु रावन मार्‌यो। पावन जस त्रिभुवन बिस्तार्‌यो॥
दीन मलीन हीन मति जाती। मो पर कृपा कीन्हि बहु भाँती॥ २॥
अब जन गृह पुनीत प्रभु कीजे। मज्जनु करिअ समर श्रम छीजे॥
देखि कोस मंदिर संपदा। देहु कृपाल कपिन्ह कहुँ मुदा॥ ३॥
सब बिधि नाथ मोहि अपनाइअ। पुनि मोहि सहित अवधपुर जाइअ॥
सुनत बचन मृदु दीनदयाला। सजल भए द्वौ नयन बिसाला॥ ४॥

When Śambhu (Lord Śiva) had finished His prayer and left, Vibhīṣaṇa then approached the Lord. Bowing his head at the latter's feet, he submitted in gentle terms: "Listen to my prayer, O Lord wielding the Śārṅga bow. My lord, You have killed Rāvaṇa with all his kinsfolk and army and spread Your sacred renown throughout the three spheres. And above all You have shown mercy in every way to me, humble, impure, low-born and mean-minded as I am. Now, my lord, consecrate Your servant's abode (by Your holy presence), bathe Yourself and beguile the exertion of the battle. Then inspect the treasury palaces and wealth and gladly bestow my gracious lord, whatever You please on the monkeys. Pray, accept me as Your own in every way, my lord, and then proceed to Ayodhyā taking me along with You." Even as the Lord, who is so compassionate to the meek, heard these polite words, His large eyes filled with tears. (1–4)

दो०—तोर कोस गृह मोर सब सत्य बचन सुनु भ्रात।
भरत दसा सुमिरत मोहि निमिष कल्प सम जात॥ ११६ (क)॥
तापस बेष गात कृस जपत निरंतर मोहि।
देखौं बेगि सो जतनु करु सखा निहोरउँ तोहि॥ ११६ (ख)॥
बीतें अवधि जाउँ जौं जिअत न पावउँ बीर।
सुमिरत अनुज प्रीति प्रभु पुनि पुनि पुलक सरीर॥ ११६ (ग)॥
करेहु कल्प भरि राजु तुम्ह मोहि सुमिरेहु मन माहिं।
पुनि मम धाम पाइहहु जहाँ संत सब जाहिं॥ ११६ (घ)॥

"Listen, brother: what you say is quite true; your treasury and palaces are all My own. But, when I recollect Bharata's condition, every moment that passes seems an age to Me. Clad in the robes of a hermit, with wasted body he constantly repeats My name. Therefore, take steps, My friend, I beseech you that I may soon be able to see him again. If, on the other hand, I reach there on the expiry of the term of My exile, I do not expect to find My brother alive." And even as the Lord recalled His brother's affection He felt a thrill all over His body again and again. "As for yourself, you shall enjoy sovereignty till the end of creation, inwardly thinking of Me all the time; and then you shall ascend to My abode, the destination of all holy men." (116 A–D)

चौ०—सुनत बिभीषन बचन राम के । हरषि गहे पद कृपाधाम के ॥
बानर भालु सकल हरषाने । गहि प्रभु पद गुन बिमल बखाने ॥ १ ॥
बहुरि बिभीषन भवन सिधायो । मनि गन बसन बिमान भरायो ॥
लै पुष्पक प्रभु आगें राखा । हँसि करि कृपासिंधु तब भाषा ॥ २ ॥
चढ़ि बिमान सुनु सखा बिभीषन । गगन जाइ बरषहु पट भूषन ॥
नभ पर जाइ बिभीषन तबही । बरषि दिए मनि अंबर सबही ॥ ३ ॥
जोइ जोइ मन भावइ सोइ लेहीं । मनि मुख मेलि डारि कपि देहीं ॥
हँसे रामु श्री अनुज समेता । परम कौतुकी कृपा निकेता ॥ ४ ॥

Delighted to hear Śrī Rāma's words, Vibhīṣaṇa clasped the feet of the All-merciful. The monkeys and bears too all rejoiced and, clasping the Lord's feet, began to recount His sacred virtues. Then Vibhīṣaṇa withdrew to his palace and had his celebrated aerial car loaded with precious stones and articles of dress. He then brought the aerial car, Puṣpaka as it was called, and set it before the Lord; and the All-merciful thereupon smilingly said, "Listen, my friend, Vibhīṣaṇa: step into the aerial car and rising into the air, scramble the clothes and ornaments." Vibhīṣaṇa immediately rose into the air and dropped down all the jewels and raiment. The monkeys picked up whatever each took a fancy to; they put precious stones into their mouth (thinking them to be some edible substance) but would throw them away (the moment they realized their mistake). Śrī Rāma as well as Śrī (Sītā) and His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) felt amused at the sight, exceedingly playful as the All-merciful is.

(1–4)

दो०—मुनि जेहि ध्यान न पावहिं नेति नेति कह बेद ।
कृपासिंधु सोइ कपिन्ह सन करत अनेक बिनोद ॥ ११७ (क) ॥
उमा जोग जप दान तप नाना मख ब्रत नेम ।
राम कृपा नहिं करहिं तसि जसि निष्केवल प्रेम ॥ ११७ (ख) ॥

That Ocean of compassion, whom sages are unable to catch even in meditation and whom the Vedas describe only in negative terms such as "Not that, not that," amused himself with the monkeys in diverse ways. Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) practice of Yoga (concentration of mind), Japa (muttering of prayers), charity and penance, performance of sacrifices, fasting and other religious observances fail to evoke Śrī Rāma's compassion to the same degree as unalloyed devotion does.

(117 A-B)

चौ०—भालु कपिन्ह पट भूषन पाए । पहिरि पहिरि रघुपति पहिं आए ॥
नाना जिनस देखि सब कीसा । पुनि पुनि हँसत कोसलाधीसा ॥ १ ॥
चितइ सबन्हि पर कीन्ही दाया । बोले मृदुल बचन रघुराया ॥
तुम्हरें बल मैं रावनु मार्‌यो । तिलक बिभीषन कहँ पुनि सार्‌यो ॥ २ ॥
निज निज गृह अब तुम्ह सब जाहू । सुमिरेहु मोहि डरपहु जनि काहू ॥
सुनत बचन प्रेमाकुल बानर । जोरि पानि बोले सब सादर ॥ ३ ॥

प्रभु जोइ कहहु तुम्हहि सब सोहा । हमरें होत बचन सुनि मोहा ॥
दीन जानि कपि किए सनाथा । तुम्ह त्रैलोक ईस रघुनाथा ॥ ४ ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन लाज हम मरहीं । मसक कहूँ खगपति हित करहीं ॥
देखि राम रुख बानर रीछा । प्रेम मगन नहिं गृह कै ईछा ॥ ५ ॥

Having thus secured raiment and jewels, the bears and monkeys adorned their person with the same and appeared before the Lord of the Raghus. The Lord of Kosala laughed again and again to see all the monkeys, a motley host indeed. The Lord of the Raghus showered His grace on all by casting a look at them, and spoke to them in endearing terms: "It was through your might that I succeeded first in killing Rāvaṇa and then in crowning Vibhīṣaṇa. Now return all of you to your several homes; keep your thought fixed on Me and fear none." The monkeys were all overcome with affection to hear these words and reverently replied with joined palms: "O Lord, whatever You say well becomes of You. But we get mystified on hearing Your words. You are the Sovereign of all the three spheres, O Lord of the Raghus; knowing our humble state You took us under Your protection. But we are overwhelmed with shame to hear such words from the lips of our Master (Yourself). Can a swarm of mosquitoes ever help Garuḍa (the king of the birds)?" The bears and monkeys were overpowered with emotion when they saw what was in the mind of the Lord, (viz., His reluctance to take them to Ayodhyā); they had no inclination to return home. (1–5)

दो०—प्रभु प्रेरित कपि भालु सब राम रूप उर राखि ।
हरष बिषाद सहित चले बिनय बिबिध बिधि भाषि ॥ ११८ (क) ॥
कपिपति नील रीछपति अंगद नल हनुमान ।
सहित बिभीषन अपर जे जूथप कपि बलवान ॥ ११८ (ख) ॥
कहि न सकहिं कछु प्रेम बस भरि भरि लोचन बारि ।
सन्मुख चितवहिं राम तन नयन निमेष निवारि ॥ ११८ (ग) ॥

But in obedience to the Lord's command the monkeys and bears all dispersed with a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow and with many a humble submission, enshrining Śrī Rāma's image in their heart. The monkey-king (Sugrīva), Nīla, Jāmbavān (the lord of the bears), Aṅgada, Nala, Hanumān and all the other mighty generals of the monkey host, together with Vibhīṣaṇa, were too overwhelmed with emotion to utter a word. With eyes full of tears they stood facing Śrī Rāma and gazing intently on Him. (118 A—C)

चौ०—अतिसय प्रीति देखि रघुराई । लीन्हे सकल बिमान चढ़ाई ॥
मन महुँ बिप्र चरन सिरु नायो । उत्तर दिसिहि बिमान चलायो ॥ १ ॥
चलत बिमान कोलाहल होई । जय रघुबीर कहइ सबु कोई ॥
सिंहासन अति उच्च मनोहर । श्री समेत प्रभु बैठे ता पर ॥ २ ॥
राजत रामु सहित भामिनी । मेरु सृंग जनु घन दामिनी ॥
रुचिर बिमानु चलेउ अति आतुर । कीन्ही सुमन बृष्टि हरषे सुर ॥ ३ ॥

परम सुखद चलि त्रिबिध बयारी । सागर सर सरि निर्मल बारी ॥
सगुन होहिं सुंदर चहुँ पासा । मन प्रसन्न निर्मल नभ आसा ॥ ४ ॥
कह रघुबीर देखु रन सीता । लछिमन इहाँ हत्यो इँद्रजीता ॥
हनूमान अंगद के मारे । रन महि परे निसाचर भारे ॥ ५ ॥
कुंभकरन रावन द्वौ भाई । इहाँ हते सुर मुनि दुखदाई ॥ ६ ॥

Perceiving their excessive love the Lord of the Raghus (mounted the aerial car along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and) took them all up into the car. He mentally bowed His head at the feet of the Brahmans and directed the car to move towards the north. An uproarious noise burst forth as the car took off, all shouting "Glory to the Hero of Raghu's line !" The car was provided with a lofty and charming throne; the Lord took His seat on it along with Śrī (Sītā). Accompanied by His Spouse, Śrī Rama shone forth like a cloud with lightning on a peak of Mount Meru. The splendid car moved with all speed on its way, to the joy of the gods, who rained down flowers on it. A most delightful cool breeze breathed soft and fragrant; the water of the ocean, lakes and streams became transparent and auspicious omens occurred on all sides. Nay, everyone felt cheerful at heart; the whole expanse of the sky including the four quarters was clear. Said the Hero of Raghu's line: "Mark, Sītā: it was on this spot that Lakṣmaṇa slew Meghanāda (the Crown Prince of Lankā). Here lie on the battle-field mighty demons killed by Hanumān and Angada. And here fell the two brothers, Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvaṇa, the torment of gods and sages.

(1–6)

दो०—इहाँ सेतु बाँध्यों अरु थापेउँ सिव सुख धाम ।
सीता सहित कृपानिधि संभुहि कीन्ह प्रनाम ॥ ११९ (क) ॥
जहँ जहँ कृपासिंधु बन कीन्ह बास बिश्राम ।
सकल देखाए जानकिहि कहे सबन्हि के नाम ॥ ११९ (ख) ॥

"It was here that I had a bridge constructed and also installed a symbol of the blissful Lord Śiva." So saying, the All-merciful Śrī Rāma and Sītā both made obeisance to Śambhu. Every spot in the woods, where the Ocean of compassion had either taken up His abode or rested awhile, was then pointed out by the Lord to Janaka's Daughter and mentioned by name. (119 A-B)

चौ०—तुरत बिमान तहाँ चलि आवा । दंडक बन जहँ परम सुहावा ॥
कुंभजादि मुनिनायक नाना । गए रामु सब कें अस्थाना ॥ १ ॥
सकल रिषिन्ह सन पाइ असीसा । चित्रकूट आए जगदीसा ॥
तहँ करि मुनिन्ह केर संतोषा । चला बिमानु तहाँ ते चोखा ॥ २ ॥
बहुरि राम जानकिहि देखाई । जमुना कलि मल हरनि सुहाई ॥
पुनि देखी सुरसरी पुनीता । राम कहा प्रनाम करु सीता ॥ ३ ॥
तीरथपति पुनि देखु प्रयागा । निरखत जन्म कोटि अघ भागा ॥
देखु परम पावनि पुनि बेनी । हरनि सोक हरि लोक निसेनी ॥ ४ ॥
पुनि देखु अवधपुरी अति पावनि । त्रिबिध ताप भव रोग नसावनि ॥ ५ ॥

Forthwith the aerial car reached the most charming Daṇḍaka forest, the abode of many a great sage like Kumbhaja (the jar-born Agastya) and others: Śrī Rāma visited the hermitages of all. After receiving the blessings of all these sages the Lord of the universe arrived at Chitrakūṭa; and, having gratified the sages there, the aerial car departed thence with all speed. Śrī Rāma next pointed out to Janaka's Daughter the beautiful Yamunā, that washes away the impurities of the Kali age. Thereafter they espied the holy Gangā (the celestial stream) and Śrī Rāma said, "Sītā, make obeisance. Now have a look at Prayāga, the king of all sacred places, whose very sight drives away sins committed through a myriad lives. Again look at the most holy Triveṇī (the confluence of the Gangā, Yamunā and the subterranean Saraswatī), the dispeller of grief and a ladder to Śrī Hari's Abode. Now see the most sacred city of Ayodhyā, that relieves the threefold agony and uproots the malady of transmigration." (1—5)

दो०—सीता सहित अवध कहुँ कीन्ह कृपाल प्रनाम ।
सजल नयन तन पुलकित पुनि पुनि हरषित राम ॥ १२० (क) ॥
पुनि प्रभु आइ त्रिबेनीं हरषित मज्जनु कीन्ह ।
कपिन्ह सहित बिप्रन्ह कहुँ दान बिबिध बिधि दीन्ह ॥ १२० (ख) ॥

The gracious Rāma and Sītā both made obeisance to Ayodhyā. Tears rushed to His eyes, every hair on His body stood erect and the Lord felt delighted again and again. The Lord then landed at the Triveṇī and with much joy bathed in the confluence. He bestowed a variety of gifts on the Brahmans and the monkeys too joined Him. (120 A-B)

चौ०—प्रभु हनुमंतहि कहा बुझाई । धरि बटु रूप अवधपुर जाई ॥
भरतहि कुसल हमारि सुनाएहु । समाचार लै तुम्ह चलि आएहु ॥ १ ॥
तुरत पवनसुत गवनत भयऊ । तब प्रभु भरद्वाज पहिं गयऊ ॥
नाना बिधि मुनि पूजा कीन्ही । अस्तुति करि पुनि आसिष दीन्ही ॥ २ ॥
मुनि पद बंदि जुगल कर जोरी । चढ़ि बिमान प्रभु चले बहोरी ॥
इहाँ निषाद सुना प्रभु आए । नाव नाव कहँ लोग बोलाए ॥ ३ ॥
सुरसरि नाघि जान तब आयो । उतरेउ तट प्रभु आयसु पायो ॥
तब सीताँ पूजी सुरसरी । बहु प्रकार पुनि चरनन्हि परी ॥ ४ ॥
दीन्हि असीस हरषि मन गंगा । सुंदरि तव अहिवात अभंगा ॥
सुनत गुहा धायउ प्रेमाकुल । आयउ निकट परम सुख संकुल ॥ ५ ॥
प्रभुहि सहित बिलोकि बैदेही । परेउ अवनि तन सुधि नहिं तेही ॥
प्रीति परम बिलोकि रघुराई । हरषि उठाइ लियो उर लाई ॥ ६ ॥

The Lord instructed Hanuman as follows:—"Go ahead of us to the city of Ayodhyā in the guise of a religious student, tell Bharata the news of our welfare and then come back with all the news about him." The son of the wind-god immediately left and the Lord then called on Bharadwāja. The sage offered Him all kinds of worship and after hymning His praises further gave Him his blessing. The Lord in His turn adored the sage's feet with joined palms, mounted the car and went on His journey. At this end the Niṣāda chief heard that the Lord had come and exclaiming "The boat, where is the boat?"

summoned his people. Meanwhile the aerial car flew across the celestial stream and landed on the bank (adjoining Śṛngaverapura) in obedience to the Lord's command. Then Sitā offered all kinds of worship to the celestial stream and threw Herself at the feet of the Goddess presiding over the stream. In gladness of soul Gangā pronounced Her blessing: "May You enjoy a happy married life without a break, O fair lady." Overwhelmed with love, Guha ran to meet the Lord as soon as he heard of His landing and approached his Master, full of ecstatic joy. Perceiving the Lord accompanied by Videha's Daughter, he felt flat on the ground oblivious of his own existence. The Lord of the Raghus felt overjoyed to see his excessive fondness; He took and clasped him to His bosom.

(1–6)

छं०—लियो हृदयँ लाइ कृपा निधान सुजान रायँ रमापती ।
बैठारि परम समीप बूझी कुसल सो कर बीनती ॥
अब कुसल पद पंकज बिलोकि बिरंचि संकर सेव्य जे ।
सुख धाम पूरनकाम राम नमामि राम नमामि ते ॥ १ ॥
सब भाँति अधम निषाद सो हरि भरत ज्यों उर लाइयो ।
मतिमंद तुलसीदास सो प्रभु मोह बस बिसराइयो ॥
यह रावनारि चरित्र पावन राम पद रतिप्रद सदा ।
कामादिहर बिग्यानकर सुर सिद्ध मुनि गावहिं मुदा ॥ २ ॥

The All-merciful Lord of Ramā (Sitā or Lakṣmī), the wisest among the wise, took and clasped him to His bosom and, seating him very close to Him, enquired after his welfare. Guha submitted in reply: "Now all is well with me; for I have beheld Your lotus feet, worthy of adoration even to Virañchi (Brahmā) and Lord Śankara. O blissful Rāma, self-sufficient as You are, I simply adore You; O Rāma, I adore You." That Niṣāda, who was low in every respect, Śrī Hari clasped to His bosom as though he were Bharata himself! A victim of infatuation, this dull-witted Tulasidāsa, however, has cast out of his mind even such a benign lord. This story of the Slayer of Rāvaṇa, is not only sanctifying but vouchsafes loving and perpetual devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet. Nay, it uproots lust and other evil passions and begets true wisdom and is gladly sung by gods, the Siddhas and sages.

(1-2)

दो०—समर बिजय रघुबीर के चरित जे सुनहिं सुजान ।
बिजय बिबेक बिभूति नित तिन्हहि देहिं भगवान ॥ १२१ (क) ॥
यह कलिकाल मलायतन मन करि देखु बिचार ।
श्रीरघुनाथ नाम तजि नाहिन आन अधार ॥ १२१ (ख) ॥

The Lord rewards with everlasting victory, wisdom and worldly prosperity those men of good understanding who listen to the stories relating to the victory of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) in battle. Ponder well and see for yourself, O my mind: this age of Kali is the very home of impurities. There is nothing to fall back upon in this age, other than the name of the illustrious Lord of the Raghus.

(121 A B)

[PAUSE 27 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

इति श्रीमद्रामचरितमानसे सकलकलिकलुषविध्वंसने
षष्ठः सोपानः समाप्तः ।

Thus ends the sixth descent into the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, that eradicates all the impurities of the Kali age.

ॐ

Sri Ramacharitamanasa

(The Manasa Lake containing the exploits of Sri Rama)

Descent VII

(Uttara-Kāṇḍa)

श्लोक

केकीकण्ठाभनीलं सुरवरविलसद्विप्रपादाब्जचिह्नं
शोभाढ्यं पीतवस्त्रं सरसिजनयनं सर्वदा सुप्रसन्नम् ।
पाणौ नाराचचापं कपिनिकरयुतं बन्धुना सेव्यमानं
नौमीड्यं जानकीशं रघुवरमनिशं पुष्पकारूढरामम् ॥ १ ॥

I unceasingly extol Śrī Rāma, the praiseworthy lord of Sītā (Janaka's Daughter), the Chief of Raghu's line, possessed of a form greenish blue as the neck of a peacock and adorned with a print of the Brahman's lotus foot,—which testifies to His being the greatest of all gods,—rich in splendour, clad in yellow robes, lotus-eyed, ever-propitious, holding a bow and arrow in His hands, mounted on the aerial car named Puṣpaka, accompanied by a host of monkeys and waited upon by His own brother (Lakṣmaṇa) (1)

कोसलेन्द्रपदकञ्जमञ्जुलौ कोमलावजमहेशवन्दितौ ।
जानकीकरसरोजलालितौ चिन्तकस्य मनभृङ्गसङ्गिनौ ॥ २ ॥

The lotus feet of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of Kosala), charming and delicate, are adored by Brahmā (the Unborn) and the greatest Lord Śiva and fondled by the lotus hands of Janaka's Daughter and are the haunt of the bee-like mind of the worshipper. (2)

कुन्दइन्दुदरगौरसुन्दरं अम्बिकापतिमभीष्टसिद्धिदम् ।
कारुणीककलकञ्जलोचनं नौमि शङ्करमनङ्गमोचनम् ॥ ३ ॥

I glorify the All-merciful Lord Śaṅkara, possessing a comely form, white as the jasmine flower, the moon and the conch, with eyes resembling a lovely lotus, Ambikā's (Mother Pārvatī's) Spouse, the bestower of one's desired fruit and the deliverer from the clutches of carnality. (3)

दो०—रहा एक दिन अवधि कर अति आरत पुर लोग ।
जहँ तहँ सोचहिं नारि नर कृस तन राम बियोग ॥

सगुन होहिं सुंदर सकल मन प्रसन्न सब केर ।
प्रभु आगवन जनाव जनु नगर रम्य चहुँ फेर ॥
कौसल्यादि मातु सब मन अनंद अस होइ ।
आयउ प्रभु श्री अनुज जुत कहन चहत अब कोइ ॥
भरत नयन भुज दच्छिन फरकत बारहिं बार ।
जानि सगुन मन हरष अति लागे करन बिचार ॥

The term of Śrī Rāma's exile was to expire only the next day, which made the people of the city extremely anxious. Wasted in body through separation from Śrī Rāma, men and women alike were plunged in thought everywhere. Meanwhile auspicious omens of all kinds occurred and everyone felt cheerful at heart. The city itself brightened up all round, as if to announce the Lord's advent. Kausalyā and the other mothers all felt inwardly happy as if someone was about to tell them that the Lord had come with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. Bharata's right eye and arm throbbed again and again. Recognizing this to be a lucky omen, he felt overjoyed at heart; but the very next moment he became thoughtful again.

चौ०—रहेउ एक दिन अवधि अधारा । समुझत मन दुख भयउ अपारा ॥
कारन कवन नाथ नहिं आयउ । जानि कुटिल किधौं मोहि बिसरायउ ॥ १ ॥
अहह धन्य लछिमन बड़भागी । राम पदारबिंदु अनुरागी ॥
कपटी कुटिल मोहि प्रभु चीन्हा । ताते नाथ संग नहिं लीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
जौं करनी समुझै प्रभु मोरी । नहिं निस्तार कलप सत कोरी ॥
जन अवगुन प्रभु मान न काऊ । दीन बंधु अति मृदुल सुभाऊ ॥ ३ ॥
मोरे जियँ भरोस दृढ़ सोई । मिलिहहिं राम सगुन सुभ होई ॥
बीतें अवधि रहहिं जौं प्राना । अधम कवन जग मोहि समाना ॥ ४ ॥

The term of Śrī Rāma's exile, which was the sole hope of his life, was going to expire only a day hence: the thought filled Bharata's mind with untold grief. "How is it that the Lord did not turn up ? Has He cast me out of His mind, knowing me to be crooked ? Ah! How blessed and fortunate is Lakṣmaṇa, who is truly devoted to Śrī Rāma's lotus feet. The Lord knew me to be false and perverse; that is why He refused to take me along with Him. If the Lord were to consider my doings, there would be no redemption for me even after countless cycles. But the Lord never takes into account the faults of His devotees, being a friend of the humble and most tender-hearted. I have a firm conviction in my heart that Śrī Rāma will surely meet me; for the omens are so propitious. But, if I outlive the expiry of the time-limit, no one would be so despicable in this world as I." (1—4)

दो०—राम बिरह सागर महँ भरत मगन मन होत ।
बिप्र रूप धरि पवनसुत आइ गयउ जनु पोत ॥ १ (क) ॥
बैठे देखि कुसासन जटा मुकुट कृस गात ।
राम राम रघुपति जपत स्रवत नयन जलजात ॥ १ (ख) ॥

While Bharata's mind was thus sinking in the ocean of separation from Śrī Rāma, the son of the wind-god, disguised as a Brahman, came like a bark to his rescue. He found Bharata seated on a mat of Kuśa grass, emaciated in body, with a coil of matted hair for a crown and the words "Rāma, Rāma, Raghupati" on his lips, his lotus eyes streaming with tears. (1 A-B)

चौ०—देखत हनूमान अति हरषेउ। पुलक गात लोचन जल बरषेउ॥
मन महँ बहुत भाँति सुख मानी। बोलेउ श्रवन सुधा सम बानी॥ १॥
जासु बिरहँ सोचहु दिन राती। रटहु निरंतर गुन गन पाँती॥
रघुकुल तिलक सुजन सुखदाता। आयउ कुसल देव मुनि त्राता॥ २॥
रिपु रन जीति सुजस सुर गावत। सीता सहित अनुज प्रभु आवत॥
सुनत बचन बिसरे सब दूखा। तृषावंत जिमि पाइ पियूषा॥ ३॥
को तुम्ह तात कहाँ ते आए। मोहि परम प्रिय बचन सुनाए॥
मारुत सुत मैं कपि हनुमाना। नामु मोर सुनु कृपानिधाना॥ ४॥
दीनबंधु रघुपति कर किंकर। सुनत भरत भेंटेउ उठि सादर॥
मिलत प्रेम नहिं हृदयँ समाता। नयन स्रवत जल पुलकित गाता॥ ५॥
कपि तव दरस सकल दुख बीते। मिले आजु मोहि राम पिरीते॥
बार बार बूझी कुसलाता। तो कहुँ देउँ काह सुनु भ्राता॥ ६॥
एहि संदेस सरिस जग माहीं। करि बिचार देखेउँ कछु नाहीं॥
नाहिन तात उरिन मैं तोही। अब प्रभु चरित सुनावहु मोही॥ ७॥
तब हनुमंत नाइ पद माथा। कहे सकल रघुपति गुन गाथा॥
कहु कपि कबहुँ कृपाल गोसाईं। सुमिरहिं मोहि दास की नाईं॥ ८॥

At this sight Hanumān was overjoyed; every hair on his body stood erect and his eyes rained copiously. He felt gratified at heart in every way and addressed Bharata in words that were as nectar to his ears: "He, in whose absence you sorrow day and night, the catalogue of whose virtues you are incessantly recounting, the glory of Raghu's line, the delight of the virtuous and the deliverer of gods and sages, has safely arrived. Having conquered His foe in battle, with the gods to hymn His praises, the Lord is now on His way with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa." The moment Bharata heard these words he forgot all his woes, like a thirsty man who has secured nectar. "Who are you, my beloved friend, and whence have you come? You have told me a most pleasing news." "Listen, O fountain of mercy: I am the son of the wind-god, a monkey; Hanumān is my name. I am a humble servant of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), the befriender of the meek." Hearing this, Bharata rose and reverently embraced him. The affection with which he embraced him was too great for his heart to contain; his eyes streamed with tears and every hair on his body stood erect. "At your very sight, O Hanumān, all my woes have disappeared. In you I have embraced today my beloved Rāma Himself." Again and again he enquired after Śrī Rāma's health and said, "Listen, brother; what shall I give you (in return for this happy news)? I have pondered and found that there is nothing in this world to match the news you have brought. I am thus unable to repay my debt to you. Now,

pray, recount to me the doings of my lord." Then Hanumān bowed his head at Bharata's feet and narrated all the meritorious deeds of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). "Tell me, Hanumān, does my gracious lord ever remember me as one of His servants?

(1—8)

छं०—निज दास ज्यों रघुबंसभूषन कबहुँ मम सुमिरन कर्‍यो ।
सुनि भरत बचन बिनीत अति कपि पुलकि तन चरनन्हि पर्‍यो ॥
रघुबीर निज मुख जासु गुन गन कहत अग जग नाथ जो ।
काहे न होइ बिनीत परम पुनीत सदगुन सिंधु सो ॥

"Did the Jewel of Raghu's line ever remember me as His servant?" Hanumān was thrilled with joy to hear this over-modest question of Bharata and fell at the latter's feet, saying to himself, "How can he be otherwise than humble, the holiest of the holy and an ocean of noble virtues, whose praises Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line), the lord of the animate and inanimate creation, recites with His own lips?"

दो०—राम प्रान प्रिय नाथ तुम्ह सत्य बचन मम तात ।
पुनि पुनि मिलत भरत सुनि हरष न हृदयँ समात ॥ २ (क) ॥
सो०—भरत चरन सिरु नाइ तुरित गयउ कपि राम पहिं ।
कही कुसल सब जाइ हरषि चलेउ प्रभु जान चढ़ि ॥ २ (ख) ॥

"To Rāma you are dear as life, my lord: take my words to be true, dear brother." Hearing this, Bharata embraced Hanumān again and again with a joy which could not be contained in his heart. Bowing his head at Bharata's feet, Hanumān forthwith returned to Śrī Rāma and drawing close to Him told Him that all was well. The Lord then mounted His aerial car and joyfully proceeded (towards His destination).

(2 A.B)

चौ०—हरषि भरत कोसलपुर आए । समाचार सब गुरहि सुनाए ॥
पुनि मंदिर महँ बात जनाई । आवत नगर कुसल रघुराई ॥ १ ॥
सुनत सकल जननीं उठि धाईं । कहि प्रभु कुसल भरत समुझाईं ॥
समाचार पुरबासिन्ह पाए । नर अरु नारि हरषि सब धाए ॥ २ ॥
दधि दुर्बा रोचन फल फूला । नव तुलसी दल मंगल मूला ॥
भरि भरि हेम थार भामिनी । गावत चलिं सिंधुरगामिनी ॥ ३ ॥
जे जैसेहिं तैसेहिं उठि धावहिं । बाल बृद्ध कहँ संग न लावहिं ॥
एक एकन्ह कहँ बूझहिं भाई । तुम्ह देखे दयाल रघुराई ॥ ४ ॥
अवधपुरी प्रभु आवत जानी । भई सकल सोभा कै खानी ॥
बहइ सुहावन त्रिबिध समीरा । भइ सरजू अति निर्मल नीरा ॥ ५ ॥

Bharata too returned with joy to Ayodhyā and broke all the news to his preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha). He then made it known inside the palace that the Lord of the Raghus was approaching Ayodhyā safe and sound. On hear-

ing the news all the mothers started up and ran; but Bharata eased their mind by personally telling them of the Lord's welfare. When the information reached the citizens, men and women all ran out in their joy (to meet their lord). With gold plates containing curds, Dūrvā grass, the sacred yellow pigment known by the name of Gorochana, fruits and flowers and young leaves of the sacred Tulasī (basil) plant, the root of all blessings, ladies sallied forth with the stately gait of an elephant, singing as they went. All ran out just as they happened to be and did not take children or old folk with them. People asked one another: "Brother, did you see the gracious Lord of the Raghus?" Having come to know of the Lord's advent, the city of Ayodhyā became a mine of all beauty. A delightful breeze breathed soft, cool and fragrant. The Sarayū rolled down crystal clear water. (1—5)

दो०—हरषित गुर परिजन अनुज भूसुर बृंद समेत ।
चले भरत मन प्रेम अति सन्मुख कृपानिकेत ॥ ३ (क) ॥
बहुतक चढ़ीं अटारिन्ह निरखहिं गगन बिमान ।
देखि मधुर सुर हरषित करहिं सुमंगल गान ॥ ३ (ख) ॥
राका ससि रघुपति पुर सिंधु देखि हरषान ।
बढ़्यो कोलाहल करत जनु नारि तरंग समान ॥ ३ (ग) ॥

Accompanied by his preceptor (the sage Vasiṣṭha) and kinsmen, his younger brother (Śatrughna) and a host of Brahmans, with a heart overflowing with affection, Bharata joyfully set forth to receive the All-merciful. Many women, who had climbed up their attics, looked above for the aerial car in the sky. And the moment they espied it they began in their joy to sing festal songs in melodious strains. Just as the sight of the full moon brings joy to the ocean and swells it, the city of Ayodhyā too joyfully rushed with a tumultuous noise to meet the Lord of the Raghus, the women of the city moving to and fro like so many waves. (3 A—C)

चौ०—इहाँ भानुकुल कमल दिवाकर । कपिन्ह देखावत नगर मनोहर ॥
सुनु कपीस अंगद लंकेसा । पावन पुरी रुचिर यह देसा ॥ १ ॥
जद्यपि सब बैकुंठ बखाना । बेद पुरान बिदित जगु जाना ॥
अवधपुरी सम प्रिय नहिं सोऊ । यह प्रसंग जानइ कोउ कोऊ ॥ २ ॥
जन्मभूमि मम पुरी सुहावनि । उत्तर दिसि बह सरजू पावनि ॥
जा मज्जन ते बिनहिं प्रयासा । मम समीप नर पावहिं बासा ॥ ३ ॥
अति प्रिय मोहि इहाँ के बासी । मम धामदा पुरी सुख रासी ॥
हरषे सब कपि सुनि प्रभु बानी । धन्य अवध जो राम बखानी ॥ ४ ॥

At the other end Śrī Rāma, who brought delight to the solar race as the sun to the lotus, was busy showing the charming city to the monkeys. "Listen, Sugrīva (lord of the monkeys), Angada and Vibhīṣaṇa (lord of Laṅkā), holy is this city and beautiful this land. Although all have extolled Vaikuṇṭha (My divine Abode), which is familiar to the Vedas and the Purāṇas and

known throughout the world, it is not so dear to Me as the city of Ayodhyā: only some rare soul knows this secret. This beautiful city is My birthplace; to the north of it flows the holy Sarayū, by bathing in which men secure a home near Me without any difficulty. The dwellers here are very dear to Me; the city is not only full of bliss itself but bestows a residence in My divine Abode." The monkeys were all delighted to hear these words of the Lord and said, "Blessed indeed is Ayodhyā, that has evoked praise from Śrī Rāma Himself!"

(1—4)

दो०—आवत देखि लोग सब कृपासिंधु भगवान।
नगर निकट प्रभु प्रेरेउ उतरेउ भूमि बिमान ॥ ४ (क) ॥
उतरि कहेउ प्रभु पुष्पकहि तुम्ह कुबेर पहिं जाहु।
प्रेरित राम चलेउ सो हरषु बिरहु अति ताहु ॥ ४ (ख) ॥

When the all-merciful Lord saw all the people coming out to meet Him, He urged on the aerial car to halt near the city and so it came down to the ground. On alighting from the car, the Lord said to the Puṣpaka, "You now return to Kubera." Thus enjoined by Śrī Rāma, the aerial car departed, full of joy and deep agony at parting.

(4 A-B)

चौ०—आए भरत संग सब लोगा। कृस तन श्रीरघुबीर बियोगा ॥
बामदेव बसिष्ट मुनिनायक। देखे प्रभु महि धरि धनु सायक ॥ १ ॥
धाइ धरे गुर चरन सरोरुह। अनुज सहित अति पुलक तनोरुह ॥
भेंटि कुसल बूझी मुनिराया। हमरें कुसल तुम्हारिहिं दाया ॥ २ ॥
सकल द्विजन्ह मिलि नायउ माथा। धर्म धुरंधर रघुकुलनाथा ॥
गहे भरत पुनि प्रभु पद पंकज। नमत जिन्हहि सुर मुनि संकर अज ॥ ३ ॥
परे भूमि नहिं उठत उठाए। बर करि कृपासिंधु उर लाए ॥
स्यामल गात रोम भए ठाढ़े। नव राजीव नयन जल बाढ़े ॥ ४ ॥

Along with Bharata came all the other people, emaciated in body because of their separation from the Hero of Raghu's line. When the Lord saw the great sages Vāmadeva, Vasiṣṭha and others, He dropped His bow and arrows on the ground and ran with His brother (Lakṣmaṇa) to clasp His preceptor's lotus feet, with every hair on their body erect. Vasiṣṭha (the chief of the sages) embraced them (in return) and enquired after their welfare. Śrī Rāma replied, "It is in your grace alone that our welfare lies." The Lord of Raghu's race, the champion of righteousness, now met all the other Brahmans and bowed His head to them. Then Bharata clasped the Lord's lotus feet, which are adored by gods and sages, Śaṅkara and Brahmā not excepted. He lay prostrate on the ground and would not rise even though being lifted up, till at last the All-merciful forcibly took and pressed him to His bosom. Every hair on His swarthy form stood erect and His lotus eyes were flooded with tears.

(1—4)

छं०—राजीव लोचन स्रवत जल तन ललित पुलकावलि बनी।
अति प्रेम हृदयँ लगाइ अनुजहि मिले प्रभु त्रिभुअन धनी ॥

प्रभु मिलत अनुजहि सोह मो पहिं जाति नहिं उपमा कही ।
जनु प्रेम अरु सिंगार तनु धरि मिले बर सुषमा लही ॥ १ ॥
बूझत कृपानिधि कुसल भरतहि बचन बेगि न आवई ।
सुनु सिवा सो सुख बचन मन ते भिन्न जान जो पावई ॥
अब कुसल कौसलनाथ आरत जानि जन दरसन दियो ।
बूड़त बिरह बारीस कृपानिधान मोहि कर गहि लियो ॥ २ ॥

His lotus eyes streamed with tears, while bristling hair served to adorn His comely person as Lord Śrī Rāma, the sovereign of the three spheres, clasped Bharata to His bosom with utmost affection. I find no parallel by which I may illustrate the beauty of the Lords meeting with His younger brother: it seemed as though the Erotic sentiment and Affection had met together in exquisite bodily form. The All-merciful enquired after Bharata's welfare; but words did not readily come to his help. Listen, Śivā: (continues Lord Śiva,) the bliss (which Bharata enjoyed at the moment) was beyond one's speech and mind; it is known only to those who feel it. "All is now well with me, since the All-merciful Lord of Kosala has blessed me with His sight, realizing the distress of His servant, and taken me by the hand just when I was sinking in the ocean of desolation." (1—2)

दो०—पुनि प्रभु हरषि सत्रुहन भेंटे हृदयँ लगाइ ।
लछिमन भरत मिले तब परम प्रेम दोउ भाइ ॥ ५ ॥

The Lord then gladly met Śatrughna and pressed him to His bosom. Next came the turn of Lakṣmaṇa and Bharata and the two brothers embraced each other with utmost affection. (5)

चौ०—भरतानुज लछिमन पुनि भेंटे । दुसह बिरह संभव दुख मेटे ॥
सीता चरन भरत सिरु नावा । अनुज समेत परम सुख पावा ॥ १ ॥
प्रभु बिलोकि हरषे पुरबासी । जनित बियोग बिपति सब नासी ॥
प्रेमातुर सब लोग निहारी । कौतुक कीन्ह कृपाल खरारी ॥ २ ॥
अमित रूप प्रगटे तेहि काला । जथाजोग मिले सबहि कृपाला ॥
कृपादृष्टि रघुबीर बिलोकी । किए सकल नर नारि बिसोकी ॥ ३ ॥
छन महिं सबहि मिले भगवाना । उमा मरम यह काहुँ न जाना ॥
एहि बिधि सबहि सुखी करि रामा । आगें चले सील गुन धामा ॥ ४ ॥
कौसल्यादि मातु सब धाई । निरखि बच्छ जनु धेनु लवाई ॥ ५ ॥

Then Lakṣmaṇa embraced Śatrughna (Bharata's younger brother)* and thus relieved each other of the terrible agony of separation. Bharata and Śatrughna bowed their head at Sītā's feet and felt supreme delight. The citizens were transported with joy at the sight of the Lord. All the woes begotten of their separation from the Lord now ended. Seeing all the people impatient in their love to meet the Lord, the All-merciful Slayer of Khara

* Although Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna were real brothers, the latter bore greater affinity to Bharata and preferred to live with him. Hence he is referred to here as Bharata's younger brother.

wrought a miracle. He forthwith appeared in countless forms and in this way the gracious Lord met everybody in an appropriate manner. The Hero of Raghu's line rid all men and women of their sorrow by casting His benign look on them. In a moment the Lord greeted them all; Umā, this was a mystery which none could comprehend. Having thus gratified all, Śrī Rāma, who was a repository of amiability and goodness, proceeded further. Kausalyā and the other mothers all ran out to meet Him, even as a cow that has lately calved would run at the sight of its little one. (1–5)

छं०—जनु धेनु बालक बच्छ तजि गृहँ चरन बन परबस गईं ।
दिन अंत पुर रुख स्रवत थन हुंकार करि धावत भईं ॥
अति प्रेम प्रभु सब मातु भेटीं बचन मृदु बहुबिधि कहे ।
गइ बिषम बिपति बियोगभव तिन्ह हरष सुख अगनित लहे ॥

It seemed as though cows that had recently calved and had been forced to go out to the woods for grazing, leaving their little ones at home, had at the close of day rushed forth lowing towards the village with dripping teats. The Lord met all the mothers with utmost affection and spoke many a soft word to them. In this way the dire calamity that had come upon them as a result of separation from Śrī Rāma came to an end and they derived infinite joy and gratification.

दो०—भेटेउ तनय सुमित्राँ राम चरन रति जानि ।
रामहि मिलत कैकई हृदयँ बहुत सकुचानि ॥ ६ (क) ॥
लछिमन सब मातन्ह मिलि हरषे आसिष पाइ ।
कैकइ कहँ पुनि पुनि मिले मन कर छोभु न जाइ ॥ ६ (ख) ॥

Sumitrā embraced her son (Lakṣmaṇa) remembering how devoted he was to Śrī Rāma's feet. As for Kaikeyī, she felt very uncomfortable at heart while embracing Śrī Rāma. Lakṣmaṇa too embraced all his mothers and was delighted to receive their blessings. But even though he met Kaikeyī again and again, his bitterness of feeling towards her did not leave him. (6 A-B)

चौ०—सासुन्ह सबनि मिली बैदेही । चरनन्हि लागि हरषु अति तेही ॥
देहिं असीस बूझि कुसलाता । होइ अचल तुम्हार अहिवाता ॥ १ ॥
सब रघुपति मुख कमल बिलोकहिं । मंगल जानि नयन जल रोकहिं ॥
कनक थार आरती उतारहिं । बार बार प्रभु गात निहारहिं ॥ २ ॥
नाना भाँति निछावरि करहीं । परमानंद हरष उर भरहीं ॥
कौसल्या पुनि पुनि रघुबीरहि । चितवति कृपासिंधु रनधीरहि ॥ ३ ॥
हृदयँ बिचारति बारहिं बारा । कवन भाँति लंकापति मारा ॥
अति सुकुमार जुगल मेरे बारे । निसिचर सुभट महाबल भारे ॥ ४ ॥

Videha's Daughter (Sītā) greeted all Her mothers-in-law and was transported with joy as She clasped their feet. They enquired after Her welfare

and blessed Her: "May your married life be happy for ever." All gazed upon the lotus face of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) and, remembering that it was an occasion for rejoicing, checked the tears that rose in their eyes. Burning festal lights in gold plates they waved them above Śrī Rāma's head (in order to ward off evil forces) and again and again contemplated the Lord's person. They scattered every kind of offering about Him (in order to avert an evil eye), their heart full of supreme felicity and jubilation. Again and again did Kausalyā gaze upon the Hero of Raghu's line, who was an ocean of compassion and an irresistible warrior, each time pondering within herself: "How can he have killed the lord of Lankā? Too delicate of body are my two boys, while the demons were great champions of extraordinary might!" (1—4)

दो॰—लछिमन अरु सीता सहित प्रभुहि बिलोकति मातु ।
परमानंद मगन मन पुनि पुनि पुलकित गातु ॥ ७ ॥

As the mother (Kausalyā) looked upon the Lord with Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, her soul was overwhelmed with supreme felicity and the hair on her body bristled up again and again. (7)

चौ॰—लंकापति कपीस नल नीला । जामवंत अंगद सुभसीला ॥
हनुमदादि सब बानर बीरा । धरे मनोहर मनुज सरीरा ॥ १ ॥
भरत सनेह सील ब्रत नेमा । सादर सब बरनहिं अति प्रेमा ॥
देखि नगरबासिन्ह कै रीती । सकल सराहहिं प्रभु पद प्रीती ॥ २ ॥
पुनि रघुपति सब सखा बोलाए । मुनि पद लागहु सकल सिखाए ॥
गुर बसिष्ट कुलपूज्य हमारे । इन्ह की कृपाँ दनुज रन मारे ॥ ३ ॥
ए सब सखा सुनहु मुनि मेरे । भए समर सागर कहँ बेरे ॥
मम हित लागि जन्म इन्ह हारे । भरतहु ते मोहि अधिक पिआरे ॥ ४ ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन मगन सब भए । निमिष निमिष उपजत सुख नए ॥ ५ ॥

Vibhīṣaṇa (the king of Lankā), Sugrīva (the lord of the monkeys), Nala, Nīla, Jāmbavān, Angada, Hanumān and the other monkey heroes, who were all of a virtuous disposition, had assumed charming human forms. With great reverence and love all applauded Bharata's affection, amiability, austerities and discipline. When they saw the citizens' mode of life, they all extolled their devotion to the Lord's feet. Then the Lord of the Raghus summoned all His comrades and exhorted them: "Clasp the feet of My Guru, the sage Vasiṣṭha, who is worthy of adoration to our whole race. It was by his grace that all the demons were slain in battle." "(Turning to the sage) Listen, holy Sir: all these My comrades proved as so many barks in taking Me across the ocean of the battle. They staked their life in My cause: they are dearer to Me even than Bharata." They were all enraptured to hear the Lord's words; every moment that passed gave birth to some new joy. (1—5)

दो॰—कौसल्या के चरनन्हि पुनि तिन्ह नायउ माथ ।
आसिष दीन्हे हरषि तुम्ह प्रिय मम जिमि रघुनाथ ॥ ८ (क) ॥

सुमन बृष्टि नभ संकुल भवन चले सुखकंद ।
चढ़ीं अटारिन्ह देखहिं नगर नारि नर बृंद ॥ ८ (ख) ॥

Then they bowed their head at Kausalyā's feet, who rejoiced to give them her blessing, adding: "You are as dear to me as the Lord of the Raghus." The sky was obscured with the showers of flowers as the Fountain of joy took His way to the palace. Throngs of men and women of the city mounted the attics to have a look at the Lord. (8 A.B)

चौ०—कंचन कलस बिचित्र सँवारे । सबहिं धरे सजि निज निज द्वारे ॥
बंदनवार पताका केतू । सबन्हि बनाए मंगल हेतू ॥ १ ॥
बीथीं सकल सुगंध सिंचाईं । गजमनि रचि बहु चौक पुराईं ॥
नाना भाँति सुमंगल साजे । हरषि नगर निसान बहु बाजे ॥ २ ॥
जहँ तहँ नारि निछावरि करहीं । देहिं असीस हरष उर भरहीं ॥
कंचन थार आरतीं नाना । जुबतीं सजें करहिं सुभ गाना ॥ ३ ॥
करहिं आरती आरतिहर कें । रघुकुल कमल बिपिन दिनकर कें ॥
पुर सोभा संपति कल्याना । निगम सेष सारदा बखाना ॥ ४ ॥
तेउ यह चरित देखि ठगि रहहीं । उमा तासु गुन नर किमि कहहीं ॥ ५ ॥

All the people placed at their door vases of gold picturesquely decorated and equipped with necessary articles. Everyone prepared and set festoons, flags and buntings, all to make a glad show. All the streets were sprinkled with perfumes and scented water and a number of mystic squares were drawn and filled in with pearls found in the projections of an elephant's forehead. Every kind of festive preparation was taken in hand; the city was *en fete* and a large number of kettle-drums sounded all at once. Ladies scattered their offerings about the Lord wherever He went, and invoked blessings on Him with their hearts full of joy. Bevies of young women sang festal songs, while gold plates provided with lights were ready at hand, which they waved about the Lord, who is the Reliever of all agony and brought delight to Raghu's race even as the sun delights a bed of lotuses. The splendour, the wealth and the good fortune of the city have been extolled by the Vedas, Śesa (the serpent-god) and Sarada (the goddess of speech and learning). But they too were dazed to see this spectacle. Uma, (continues Lord Siva,) how, then, can any mortal recount His virtues ? (1—5)

दो०—नारि कुमुदिनीं अवध सर रघुपति बिरह दिनेस ।
अस्त भएँ बिगसत भईं निरखि राम राकेस ॥ ९ (क) ॥
होहिं सगुन सुभ बिबिधि बिधि बाजहिं गगन निसान ।
पुर नर नारि सनाथ करि भवन चले भगवान ॥ ९ (ख) ॥

The women, who were like water-lilies growing in the lake of Ayodhya and had been withered by the sun in the form of separation from the Lord of the Raghus, blossomed again at the sight of Sri Rama, who resembled the full moon, the sun of separation having now set. Auspicious omens of every description occurred

and kettle-drums sounded in the sky as the Lord proceeded to the palace after blessing the men and women of the city with His sight. (9 A-B)

चौ०—प्रभु जानी कैकई लजानी । प्रथम तासु गृह गए भवानी ॥
ताहि प्रबोधि बहुत सुख दीन्हा । पुनि निज भवन गवन हरि कीन्हा ॥ १ ॥
कृपासिंधु जब मंदिर गए । पुर नर नारि सुखी सब भए ॥
गुर बसिष्ट द्विज लिए बुलाई । आजु सुघरी सुदिन समुदाई ॥ २ ॥
सब द्विज देहु हरषि अनुसासन । रामचंद्र बैठहिं सिंघासन ॥
मुनि बसिष्ट के बचन सुहाए । सुनत सकल बिप्रन्ह अति भाए ॥ ३ ॥
कहहिं बचन मृदु बिप्र अनेका । जग अभिराम राम अभिषेका ॥
अब मुनिबर बिलंब नहिं कीजै । महाराज कहँ तिलक करीजै ॥ ४ ॥

Bhavānī, (continues Lord Śiva,) the Lord came to know that Kaikeyī was ashamed and went first to her palace. After reassuring and gratifying her much Śrī Hari (Śrī Rāma) then moved to His own palace. When the All-merciful entered the palace, every man and woman of the city felt gratified. The preceptor, Vasistha, called the Brahmans and said to them, "The day and the hour, nay, all the other factors are favourable today. Therefore, all of you, Brahmans, be pleased to order that Śrī Rāmachandra may occupy the royal throne." On hearing the agreeable words of the sage Vasistha all the Brahmans warmly welcomed them. Many of the Brahmans spoke in endearing terms, "Śrī Rāma's coronation will bring delight to the whole world. Delay no more, O good sage, but apply the sacred mark on the forehead of His Majesty as a token of sovereignty." (1—4)

दो०—तब मुनि कहेउ सुमंत्र सन सुनत चलेउ हरषाइ ।
रथ अनेक बहु बाजि गज तुरत सँवारे जाइ ॥ १० (क) ॥
जहँ तहँ धावन पठइ पुनि मंगल द्रब्य मगाइ ।
हरष समेत बसिष्ट पद पुनि सिरु नायउ आइ ॥ १० (ख) ॥

The sage thereupon instructed Sumantra, who, as soon as he received the order, merrily proceeded and forthwith got ready a number of chariots and numerous horses and elephants. Despatching messengers here and there he sent for articles of good omen; then gladly returning to Vasistha, he bowed his head at his feet. (10 A-B)

[PAUSE 8 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

चौ०—अवधपुरी अति रुचिर बनाई । देवन्ह सुमन बृष्टि झरि लाई ॥
राम कहा सेवकन्ह बुलाई । प्रथम सखन्ह अन्हवावहु जाई ॥ १ ॥
सुनत बचन जहँ तहँ जन धाए । सुग्रीवादि तुरत अन्हवाए ॥
पुनि करुनानिधि भरतु हँकारे । निज कर राम जटा निरुआरे ॥ २ ॥
अन्हवाए प्रभु तीनिउ भाई । भगत बछल कृपाल रघुराई ॥
भरत भाग्य प्रभु कोमलताई । सेष कोटि सत सकहिं न गाई ॥ ३ ॥

पुनि निज जटा राम बिबराए । गुर अनुसासन मागि नहाए ॥
करि मज्जन प्रभु भूषन साजे । अंग अनंग देखि सत लाजे ॥ ४ ॥

The city of Ayodhyā was most tastefully decorated and the gods rained down a continuous shower of flowers. Śrī Rāma called His servants and said, "Go and first arrange a bath for my comrades." The moment they heard the command the servants ran in all promptness and quickly bathed Sugrīva and the rest. The All-merciful Rāma next called Bharata and disentangled his matted hair with His own hands. The gracious and almighty Lord of the Raghus, who is so fond of His devotees, now bathed all His three brothers. The blessedness of Bharata and the Lord's tenderness were both more than countless Śeṣas could sing. Then Śrī Rāma disentangled His own matted hair, and after obtaining the Guru's permission bathed Himself. Having finished His ablutions, the Lord decked Himself with jewels; the beauty of His person put to shame hundreds of Cupids. (1–4)

दो०—सासुन्ह सादर जानकिहि मज्जन तुरत कराइ ।
दिब्य बसन बर भूषन अँग अँग सजे बनाइ ॥ ११ (क) ॥
राम बाम दिसि सोभति रमा रूप गुन खानि ।
देखि मातु सब हरषीं जन्म सुफल निज जानि ॥ ११ (ख) ॥
सुनु खगेस तेहि अवसर ब्रह्मा सिव मुनि बृंद ।
चढ़ि बिमान आए सब सुर देखन सुखकंद ॥ ११ (ग) ॥

(In the gynaeceum) the mothers-in-law immediately bathed Janaka's Daughter with all tenderness and carefully attired Her in heavenly robes with rich jewels for every part of Her body. On Śrī Rāma's left side shone forth Ramā (Lakṣmī) Herself, a mine of beauty and goodness. The mothers were all delighted at the sight and accounted their life as fully rewarded. Listen, O king of the birds: (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi,) on that occasion Brahmā (the Creator), Lord Śiva and multitudes of sages came to see the Fountain of joy and so did all the gods, mounted on their aerial cars. (11 A–C)

चौ०—प्रभु बिलोकि मुनि मन अनुरागा । तुरत दिब्य सिंघासन मागा ॥
रबि सम तेज सो बरनि न जाई । बैठे राम द्विजन्ह सिरु नाई ॥ १ ॥
जनकसुता समेत रघुराई । पेखि प्रहरषे मुनि समुदाई ॥
बेद मंत्र तब द्विजन्ह उचारे । नभ सुर मुनि जय जयति पुकारे ॥ २ ॥
प्रथम तिलक बसिष्ट मुनि कीन्हा । पुनि सब बिप्रन्ह आयसु दीन्हा ॥
सुत बिलोकि हरषीं महतारी । बार बार आरती उतारी ॥ ३ ॥
बिप्रन्ह दान बिबिधि बिधि दीन्हे । जाचक सकल अजाचक कीन्हे ॥
सिंघासन पर त्रिभुअन साईं । देखि सुरन्ह दुंदुभीं बजाईं ॥ ४ ॥

The soul of the sage (Vasiṣṭha) was enraptured as he gazed upon the Lord; he sent at once for a heavenly throne, which was effulgent as the sun and defied all description. Bowing His head to the Brahmans, Śrī Rāma took

His seat thereon. The whole host of sages was overjoyed as they looked upon the Lord of the Raghus along with Janaka's Daughter. Then the Brahmans recited the Vedic hymns, while in the heavens above the gods and sages shouted "Victory! Victory!!" The sage Vasiṣṭha first of all applied the sacred mark himself and then he directed all the other Brahmans to do likewise. The mothers were transported with joy at the sight of their son and waved lights above His head again and again. They bestowed a variety of gifts on the Brahmans and gave the beggars so much that they begged no more. Perceiving the Lord of all the three spheres seated on the throne of Ayodhyā the gods sounded their kettle-drums. (1—4)

छं०—नभ दुंदुभीं बाजहिं बिपुल गंधर्ब किंनर गावहीं।
नाचहिं अपछरा बृंद परमानंद सुर मुनि पावहीं॥
भरतादि अनुज बिभीषनांगद हनुमदादि समेत ते।
गहें छत्र चामर ब्यजन धनु असि चर्म सक्ति बिराजते॥ १॥
श्री सहित दिनकर बंस भूषन काम बहु छबि सोहई।
नव अंबुधर बर गात अंबर पीत सुर मन मोहई॥
मुकुटांगदादि बिचित्र भूषन अंग अंगन्हि प्रति सजे।
अंभोज नयन बिसाल उर भुज धन्य नर निरखंति जे॥ २॥

A large number of kettle-drums sounded in the heavens above; the Gandharvas and Kinnaras (the celestial musicians) sang and heavenly nymphs danced to the supreme delight of the gods and sages. Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna with Vibhīṣaṇa, Aṅgada, Hanumān and the rest shone forth beside the Lord, each holding severally the royal umbrella, *chowrie*, fan, bow, sword with shield and spear. With Lakṣmī (Sītā) by His side the Jewel of the solar race shone forth with the beauty of a myriad Cupids. His exquisite form, possessing the hue of a fresh rain-cloud, clad in yellow robes, enchanted the soul of gods. A diadem, armlets and other marvellous ornaments adorned the various parts of His body; He had lotus-like eyes and a broad chest and long arms. Blessed indeed are those men who behold such a form. (1—2)

दो०—वह सोभा समाज सुख कहत न बनइ खगेस।
बरनहिं सारद सेष श्रुति सो रस जान महेस॥ १२ (क)॥
भिन्न भिन्न अस्तुति करि गए सुर निज निज धाम।
बंदी बेष बेद तब आए जहँ श्रीराम॥ १२ (ख)॥
प्रभु सर्बग्य कीन्ह अति आदर कृपानिधान।
लखेउ न काहूँ मरम कछु लगे करन गुन गान॥ १२ (ग)॥

O king of the birds, (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi,) the beauty of the sight, the uniqueness of the assembly and the delight of the occasion each defied description. Śāradā (the goddess of learning), Śeṣa (the thousand-headed serpent-

god) and the Vedas ever describe them; while their sapor is known to the great Lord Śiva alone. Having severally hymned the Lord's praises the gods returned each to his own abode. Then came the Vedas, in the disguise of bards, into the presence of Sri Rama. The omniscient and all-merciful Lord received them with great honour, though no one else could penetrate into the mystery; and the bards began to recite His praises:— (12 A—C)

छं०—जय सगुन निर्गुन रूप रूप अनूप भूप सिरोमने ।
दसकंधरादि प्रचंड निसिचर प्रबल खल भुज बल हने ॥
अवतार नर संसार भार बिभंजि दारुन दुख दहे ।
जय प्रनतपाल दयाल प्रभु संजुक्त सक्ति नमामहे ॥ १ ॥
तव बिषम माया बस सुरासुर नाग नर अग जग हरे ।
भव पंथ भ्रमत अमित दिवस निसि काल कर्म गुननि भरे ॥
जे नाथ करि करुना बिलोके त्रिबिधि दुख ते निर्बहे ।
भव खेद छेदन दच्छ हम कहुँ रच्छ राम नमामहे ॥ २ ॥
जे ग्यान मान बिमत्त तव भव हरनि भक्ति न आदरी ।
ते पाइ सुर दुर्लभ पदादपि परत हम देखत हरी ॥
बिस्वास करि सब आस परिहरि दास तव जे होइ रहे ।
जपि नाम तव बिनु श्रम तरहिं भव नाथ सो समरामहे ॥ ३ ॥
जे चरन सिव अज पूज्य रज सुभ परसि मुनिपतिनी तरी ।
नख निर्गता मुनि बंदिता त्रैलोक पावनि सुरसरी ॥
ध्वज कुलिस अंकुस कंज जुत बन फिरत कंटक किन लहे ।
पद कंज द्वंद मुकुंद राम रमेस नित्य भजामहे ॥ ४ ॥
अब्यक्तमूलमनादि तरु त्वच चारि निगमागम भने ।
षट कंध साखा पंच बीस अनेक पर्न सुमन घने ॥
फल जुगल बिधि कटु मधुर बेलि अकेलि जेहि आश्रित रहे ।
पल्लवत फूलत नवल नित संसार बिटप नमामहे ॥ ५ ॥
जे ब्रह्म अजमद्वैतमनुभवगम्य मनपर ध्यावहीं ।
ते कहहुँ जानहुँ नाथ हम तव सगुन जस नित गावहीं ॥
करुनायतन प्रभु सदगुनाकर देव यह बर मागहीं ।
मन बचन कर्म बिकार तजि तव चरन हम अनुरागहीं ॥ ६ ॥

"Hail, Crest-Jewel of kings, incomparable in Your beauty; though transcending Māyā and her attributes, You possess innumerable divine attributes. You killed by the might of Your arm fierce, mighty and wicked demons like the ten-headed Rāvana. Appearing in human garb, You crushed the armies that constituted the

Earth's burden and ended her terrible woes. Hail, merciful Lord, Protector of the suppliant! We adore You with Your Spouse. Subject to Your relentless Maya (deluding potency), O Hari, gods and demons, Nagas and human beings, nay, all animate and inanimate beings wander for numberless days and nights in the path of metempsychosis impelled by Time, Karma (destiny) and the Gunas (modes of Prakrti). Those, O Lord, whom You ever regarded with compassion have been rid of the threefold affliction. Protect us, Rāma, prompt as You are in putting an end to the toils of mundane existence; we adore You. Intoxicated with the pride of wisdom, they who respect not Devotion to You, which takes away the fear of transmigration, may climb up to a rank which even gods find it difficult to attain; yet, O Hari, we see them fall from it On the other hand, they who have abandoned all other hopes and with unqualified faith choose to remain Your servants easily cross the ocean of transmigration by merely repeating Your Name. It is for this reason, O Lord, that we particularly invoke You. O Mukunda (Bestower of Liberation), O Rama, O Lord of Rama (Laksmī), we ever adore Your lotus feet, which are worthy of adoration to Lord Siva and the unborn Brahma, the touch of whose blessed dust redeemed Ahalya (the wife of the sage Gautama), from whose nails flowed the heavenly stream (Ganga),—which is reverenced even by the sages and sanctifies all the three spheres,—and the soles of which, while bearing the marks of a flag, thunderbolt, goad and lotus, are further adorned by scars left by thorns that pricked them in course of Your wanderings in the forest. We further adore You as the tree of the universe, which, as the Vedas and the Agamas (Tantras) declare, has its root in the Unmanifest (Brahma) and has existed from time without beginning; which has four coats* of bark, six stems, twenty-five boughs, numberless leaves and abundant flowers; which bears two kinds of fruits—bitter and sweet, which has a solitary creeper clinging to it and which puts on ever fresh foliage and ever-new flowers. Let those who meditate on Brahma (the Absolute) as unborn, the one without a second, perceptible only through intuition and as beyond the ken of mind, preach and believe like that. We, for our part, O Lord, ever chant the glories of Your visible form. O all-merciful and all-effulgent Lord, O mine of noble virtues, this is the boon we ask of You: may we love Your feet, casting off all aberrations of thought, word and deed." (1—6)

दो०—सब के देखत बेदन्ह बिनती कीन्हि उदार।
अंतर्धान भए पुनि गए ब्रह्म आगार ॥ १३ (क) ॥

---

* The four states of consciousness, viz., waking life (जाग्रत्), dream (स्वप्न), sound sleep (सुषुप्ति) and the pure impersonal state (तुरीय) are the four coats of bark referred to here; the six states of existence, viz., to be (अस्ति), to come into being (जायते), to undergo transformation (विपरिणमते), to grow (वर्द्धते), to decay (क्षीयते) and to perish (नश्यति) are the six stems; the twenty-five categories of which this world of matter is composed (viz., Prakṛti or Primordial Matter, Mahat or Cosmic Reason, Ahankara or the Cosmic Ego-sense, Manas or the Cosmic Mind, Chitta or the Cosmic Intellect, the five senses of perception, viz., the senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell, the five subtle elements (Tanmātras) and the five Mahābhūtas are the twenty-five boughs; the countless latent desires are the numberless leaves, the numerous acts of volition to attain such desires are the abundant flowers, pleasure and pain are the twofold fruit and Maya (Cosmic Illusion) is the creeper that clings to this tree of the universe.

बैनतेय सुनु संभु तब आए जहँ रघुबीर ।
बिनय करत गदगद गिरा पूरित पुलक सरीर ॥ १३ (ख) ॥

While everyone looked on, the Vedas uttered their grand prayer; and then they vanished out of sight and returned to Brahmā's abode (Satyaloka or the seventh Paradise). Listen, O Garuḍa (son of Vinatā): then came Śambhu (Lord Śiva) into the presence of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) and with a choking voice and every hair on his body standing erect He thus made supplication:— (13 A-B)

छं०—जय राम रमारमनं समनं । भव ताप भयाकुल पाहि जनं ॥
अवधेस सुरेस रमेस बिभो । सरनागत मागत पाहि प्रभो ॥ १ ॥
दससीस बिनासन बीस भुजा । कृत दूरि महा महि भूरि रुजा ॥
रजनीचर बृंद पतंग रहे । सर पावक तेज प्रचंड दहे ॥ २ ॥
महि मंडल मंडन चारुतरं । धृत सायक चाप निषंग बरं ॥
मद मोह महा ममता रजनी । तम पुंज दिवाकर तेज अनी ॥ ३ ॥
मनजात किरात निपात किए । मृग लोग कुभोग सरेन हिए ॥
हति नाथ अनाथनि पाहि हरे । बिषया बन पावँर भूलि परे ॥ ४ ॥
बहु रोग बियोगन्हि लोग हए । भवदंघ्रि निरादर के फल ए ॥
भव सिंधु अगाध परे नर ते । पद पंकज प्रेम न जे करते ॥ ५ ॥
अति दीन मलीन दुखी नितहीं । जिन्ह कें पद पंकज प्रीति नहीं ॥
अवलंब भवंत कथा जिन्ह कें । प्रिय संत अनंत सदा तिन्ह कें ॥ ६ ॥
नहिं राग न लोभ न मान मदा । तिन्ह कें सम बैभव वा बिपदा ॥
एहि ते तव सेवक होत मुदा । मुनि त्यागत जोग भरोस सदा ॥ ७ ॥
करि प्रेम निरंतर नेम लिएँ । पद पंकज सेवत सुद्ध हिएँ ॥
सम मानि निरादर आदरही । सब संत सुखी बिचरंति मही ॥ ८ ॥
मुनि मानस पंकज भृंग भजे । रघुबीर महा रनधीर अजे ॥
तव नाम जपामि नमामि हरी । भव रोग महागद मान अरी ॥ ९ ॥
गुन सील कृपा परमायतनं । प्रनमामि निरंतर श्रीरमनं ॥
रघुनंद निकंदय द्वंद्वघनं । महिपाल बिलोकय दीन जनं ॥ १० ॥

"Hail to You, Rāma, Ramā's (Sītā's) Spouse, Reliever of the afflictions of worldly existence! Protect this servant, who is obsessed with the fear of transmigration. O King of Ayodhyā, Ruler of the gods, Lord of Lakṣmī, all-pervading Master! Having fled to You for refuge, I implore You: pray, extend Your protection to Me. By disposing of Rāvaṇa who possessed as many as ten heads and twenty arms, You rid the earth of many a severe scourge. The hosts

of demons were a veritable swarm of moths that were reduced to ashes by the fierce glow of Your fire-like arrows. An exceedingly beautiful jewel of the terrestrial globe, You have armed Yourself with an excellent bow, arrows and quiver. You are a radiant sun as it were to disperse the thick darkness prevailing in the night of pride, gross ignorance and attachment. The hunter in the form of lust has laid low the human deer by piercing his heart with the shafts of evil desire; O Lord ! pray, kill the hunter and thus save the life of these poor helpless creatures, lost as they are in the wilderness of sensuality, O Hari ! People are stricken with a host of diseases and bereavements, which are surely the result of neglecting Your feet. Those men who cherish no love for Your lotus feet continue to drift in the fathomless ocean of mundane existence. They are ever most wretched, impure and unhappy, who have no devotion to Your lotus feet. On the other hand, they who derive their sustenance from Your stories hold the saints and the eternal Lord (Yourself) as constantly dear to them. They are free from passion, greed, pride and arrogance; prosperity and adversity are alike to them. That is why sages give up for ever all faith in Yoga (mental discipline) and gladly become Your servants. With a pure heart and under a solemn pledge they constantly and lovingly adore Your lotus feet. Regarding honour and ignominy alike, all such saints move about happily on this earth. O Hero of Raghu's line, invincible and exceedingly staunch in battle, indwelling as a bee the lotus heart of sages, I take refuge in You. I repeat Your Name and bow to You, O Hari; You are a sovereign remedy for the disease of birth and death and an enemy of pride. I constantly greet You, Lakṣmī's Spouse, supreme abode of goodness, amiability and compassion. O Delight of the Raghus, put an end to all pairs of contrary experiences (such as joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, attraction and repulsion, etc.); O Ruler of the earth, just cast a glance on this humble servant. (1—10)

दो०—बार बार बर मागउँ हरषि देहु श्रीरंग ।
पद सरोज अनपायनी भगति सदा सतसंग ॥ १४ (क) ॥
बरनि उमापति राम गुन हरषि गए कैलास ।
तब प्रभु कपिन्ह दिवाए सब बिधि सुखप्रद बास ॥ १४ (ख) ॥

"Again and again I ask only this boon of You,—be pleased to grant it, O Lord of Lakṣmī: unceasing devotion to Your lotus feet and constant communion with Your devotees." Having thus hymned Śrī Rāma's praises, Umā's lord (Śiva) joyously returned to Kailāsa. The Lord then assigned the monkeys residences that were comfortable in every respect. (14 A-B)

चौ०—सुनु खगपति यह कथा पावनी । त्रिबिध ताप भव भय दावनी ॥
महाराज कर सुभ अभिषेका । सुनत लहहिं नर बिरति बिबेका ॥ १ ॥
जे सकाम नर सुनहिं जे गावहिं । सुख संपति नाना बिधि पावहिं ॥
सुर दुर्लभ सुख करि जग माहीं । अंतकाल रघुपति पुर जाहीं ॥ २ ॥
सुनहिं बिमुक्त बिरत अरु बिषई । लहहिं भगति गति संपति नई ॥
खगपति राम कथा मैं बरनी । स्वमति बिलास त्रास दुख हरनी ॥ ३ ॥
बिरति बिबेक भगति दृढ़ करनी । मोह नदी कहँ सुंदर तरनी ॥
नित नव मंगल कौसलपुरी । हरषित रहहिं लोग सब कुरी ॥ ४ ॥

नित नइ प्रीति राम पद पंकज । सब कें जिन्हहि नमत सिव मुनि अज ॥
मंगन बहु प्रकार पहिराए । द्विजन्ह दान नाना बिधि पाए ॥ ५ ॥

Listen, O king of the birds, (continues Kākabhusundi): this story purifies the heart and rids one of the threefold affliction and the fear of birth and death. By hearing the narrative of King Rama's blessed Coronation men acquire dispassion and discernment. Those men who hear or sing it with some interested motive attain happiness and prosperity of every kind; after enjoying in this world pleasures to which even gods can scarce attain they ascend to Śrī Rama's divine Abode at the end of their earthly career. If a liberated soul, a man of dispassion and a sensual person hear it, they severally obtain Devotion, final beatitude and ever-increasing prosperity. O king of the birds, (continues Kakabhusundi,) the story of Srī Rāma, that I have narrated according to my own lights, takes away the fear of birth and death and rids one of sorrow. It confirms one's dispassion, discernment and devotion and is a splendid boat to take one across the river of ignorance. Every day there was some new rejoicing in Kosalapura (the city of Ayodhya); people of all classes were happy. Everybody cherished an ever-growing affection for Srī Rama's lotus feet, which are adored even by Lord Siva, Brahma (the Unborn) and the sages. Mendicants were provided with clothes of various kinds; while the twice-born (Brahmans) received gifts of every description. (1—5)

दो०—ब्रह्मानंद मगन कपि सब कें प्रभु पद प्रीति ।
जात न जाने दिवस तिन्ह गए मास षट बीति ॥ १५ ॥

The monkeys were drowned in the joy of absorption into Brahma; all were devoted to the Lord's feet. Days rolled by them unnoticed till a period of six months had elapsed. (15)

चौ०—बिसरे गृह सपनेहुँ सुधि नाहीं । जिमि परद्रोह संत मन माहीं ॥
तब रघुपति सब सखा बोलाए । आइ सबन्हि सादर सिरु नाए ॥ १ ॥
परम प्रीति समीप बैठारे । भगत सुखद मृदु बचन उचारे ॥
तुम्ह अति कीन्हि मोरि सेवकाई । मुख पर केहि बिधि करौं बड़ाई ॥ २ ॥
ताते मोहि तुम्ह अति प्रिय लागे । मम हित लागि भवन सुख त्यागे ॥
अनुज राज संपति बैदेही । देह गेह परिवार सनेही ॥ ३ ॥
सब मम प्रिय नहिं तुम्हहि समाना । मृषा न कहउँ मोर यह बाना ॥
सब कें प्रिय सेवक यह नीती । मोरें अधिक दास पर प्रीती ॥ ४ ॥

They had forgotten their home so completely that they never thought of it even in a dream any more than a saint would harbour ill will towards another. The Lord of the Raghus then called all His comrades; all came and bowed their head with reverence. Most lovingly He seated them by His side and addressed them in tender words, which were the delight of devotees: "You have rendered unstinted service to Me; but how can I praise you to your face? You renounced your home and comforts on My account; hence you have endeared yourselves most to Me. My younger brothers, My crown, My fortune, Sita (My spouse), My life, My home, My near and dear

ones are all dear to Me; but none so dear as you: I tell you no untruth, I simply reveal My nature to you. Every master, as a rule, loves his servant; but I, for one, am exceptionally fond of My servants. (1—4)

दो०—अब गृह जाहु सखा सब भजेहु मोहि दृढ़ नेम।
सदा सर्बगत सर्बहित जानि करेहु अति प्रेम ॥ १६ ॥

"Now, My comrades, return to your homes all of you, and worship Me with a steadfast vow. Knowing Me as omnipresent and friendly to all, love Me most dearly." (16)

चौ०—सुनि प्रभु बचन मगन सब भए। को हम कहाँ बिसरि तन गए ॥
एकटक रहे जोरि कर आगे। सकहिं न कछु कहि अति अनुरागे ॥ १ ॥
परम प्रेम तिन्ह कर प्रभु देखा। कहा बिबिधि बिधि ग्यान बिसेषा ॥
प्रभु सन्मुख कछु कहन न पारहिं। पुनि पुनि चरन सरोज निहारहिं ॥ २ ॥
तब प्रभु भूषन बसन मगाए। नाना रंग अनूप सुहाए ॥
सुग्रीवहि प्रथमहिं पहिराए। बसन भरत निज हाथ बनाए ॥ ३ ॥
प्रभु प्रेरित लछिमन पहिराए। लंकापति रघुपति मन भाए ॥
अंगद बैठ रहा नहिं डोला। प्रीति देखि प्रभु ताहि न बोला ॥ ४ ॥

On hearing the Lord's words all were so enraptured that they forgot their bodily existence and did not know who and where they were. Joining their palms they stood looking on with unwinking eyes; they were too overwhelmed with love to speak anything. The Lord perceived their excessive fondness and gave them special instruction in wisdom inculcating the truth on them in various ways. They, however, could not utter a word in the presence of the Lord; they would simply gaze on His lotus feet again and again. The Lord then called for jewels and costumes of various colours, incomparably beautiful; and Bharata with his own hands got ready a set with which he invested Sugrīva first of all. By the Lord's command Laksmana then invested Vibhīsana (the king of Lankā) with another set, which gladdened the heart of Srī Rama (the Lord of the Raghus). Angada, however, remained seated and refused to stir; and the Lord who saw his affection did not call him. (1—4)

दो०—जामवंत नीलादि सब पहिराए रघुनाथ।
हियँ धरि राम रूप सब चले नाइ पद माथ ॥ १७ (क) ॥
तब अंगद उठि नाइ सिरु सजल नयन कर जोरि।
अति बिनीत बोलेउ बचन मनहुँ प्रेम रस बोरि ॥ १७ (ख) ॥

Then the Lord of the Raghus Himself invested with clothes and jewels Jāmbavān, Nīla and all the rest; and enshrining Śrī Rāma's image in their heart they all bowed their heads at His feet and took their leave. Now Angada arose and bowed his head; and with joined palms and eyes full of tears he addressed the Lord in words which were not only most polite but steeped as it were in the nectar of love:— (17 A-B)

चौ०—सुनु सर्बग्य कृपा सुख सिंधो । दीन दयाकर आरत बंधो ॥
मरती बेर नाथ मोहि बाली । गयउ तुम्हारेहि कोंछें घाली ॥ १ ॥
असरन सरन बिरदु संभारी । मोहि जनि तजहु भगत हितकारी ॥
मोरें तुम्ह प्रभु गुर पितु माता । जाउँ कहाँ तजि पद जलजाता ॥ २ ॥
तुम्हहि बिचारि कहहु नरनाहा । प्रभु तजि भवन काज मम काहा ॥
बालक ग्यान बुद्धि बल हीना । राखहु सरन नाथ जन दीना ॥ ३ ॥
नीचि टहल गृह कै सब करिहउँ । पद पंकज बिलोकि भव तरिहउँ ॥
अस कहि चरन परेउ प्रभु पाही । अब जनि नाथ कहहु गृह जाही ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, all-wise, all-merciful and all-blissful Lord, full of compassion to the meek and the befriender of the afflicted: it was in Your charge, my lord, that Vālī (my father) left me while departing from this world. Therefore, recalling Your vow of affording protection to the forlorn, forsake me not, O benefactor of the devotees. You are my master, preceptor, father and mother, all in one; where can I go, leaving Your lotus feet? Ponder Yourself and tell me, O Ruler of men: severed from You, of what use is my home to me? Extend Your protection to this humble servant, a mere child, without knowledge, reason or strength. I will do all menial service in Your household and shall cross the ocean of mundane existence by the mere sight of Your lotus feet." So saying he fell at His feet, adding, "Save me, my lord, and tell me no more, my master, to return home." (1—4)

दो०—अंगद बचन बिनीत सुनि रघुपति करुना सींव ।
प्रभु उठाइ उर लायउ सजल नयन राजीव ॥ १८ (क) ॥
निज उर माल बसन मनि बालितनय पहिराइ ।
बिदा कीन्हि भगवान तब बहु प्रकार समुझाइ ॥ १८ (ख) ॥

Hearing Angada's humble entreaty Lord Śrī Rāma, the perfection of tenderness, raised him and clasped him to His bosom, His lotus eyes streaming with tears. Investing Vālī's son (Angada) with the garland that hung on His own bosom as well as with His own robes and jewels, the Lord then sent him away with many words of consolation. (18 A-B)

चौ०—भरत अनुज सौमित्रि समेता । पठवन चले भगत कृत चेता ॥
अंगद हृदयँ प्रेम नहिं थोरा । फिरि फिरि चितव राम कीं ओरा ॥ १ ॥
बार बार कर दंड प्रनामा । मन अस रहन कहहिं मोहि रामा ॥
राम बिलोकनि बोलनि चलनी । सुमिरि सुमिरि सोचत हँसि मिलनी ॥ २ ॥
प्रभु रुख देखि बिनय बहु भाषी । चलेउ हृदयँ पद पंकज राखी ॥
अति आदर सब कपि पहुँचाए । भाइन्ह सहित भरत पुनि आए ॥ ३ ॥
तब सुग्रीव चरन गहि नाना । भाँति बिनय कीन्हे हनुमाना ॥
दिन दस करि रघुपति पद सेवा । पुनि तव चरन देखिहउँ देवा ॥ ४ ॥
पुन्य पुंज तुम्ह पवनकुमारा । सेवहु जाइ कृपा आगारा ॥
अस कहि कपि सब चले तुरंता । अंगद कहइ सुनहु हनुमंता ॥ ५ ॥

Conscious of the devotees' services, Bharata as well as his younger brother (Śatrughna) and Lakṣmaṇa (Sumitrā's son) proceeded to see them off. Angada's heart was so full of love that he would turn again and again to have one more look at Śrī Rāma. He would repeatedly prostrate himself on the ground and expected that Śrī Rāma might ask him to stay on. He became sad as he recalled the characteristic way in which Śrī Rāma looked, talked, walked and smilingly greeted His friends. But when he perceived in the Lord's look what was in His mind, he departed with many a word of prayer, impressing His lotus feet on his heart. Having seen all the monkeys off with utmost respect, Bharata and his younger brothers returned. Then Hanumān (who had evidently accompanied his master to see him off) clasped the feet of Sugrīva and sought his favour in many ways: "After spending ten more days in the service of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), if you please, I will see your feet again, my master." "A storehouse of merit as you are, O son of the wind-god, you go and serve the All-merciful." So saying, all the monkeys forthwith departed. Angada, however, tarried to say, "Listen, Hanumān:—

(1—5)

दो०—कहेहु दंडवत प्रभु सैं तुम्हहि कहउ कर जोरि ।
बार बार रघुनायकहि सुरति कराएहु मोरि ॥ १९ (क) ॥
अस कहि चलेउ बालिसुत फिरि आयउ हनुमंत ।
तासु प्रीति प्रभु सन कही मगन भए भगवंत ॥ १९ (ख) ॥
कुलिसहु चाहि कठोर अति कोमल कुसुमहु चाहि ।
चित्त खगेस राम कर समुझि परइ कहु काहि ॥ १९ (ग) ॥

"With joined palms I beseech you: please convey my prostrations to the Lord and remember me to Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) from time to time." So saying, Vālī's son (Angada) started on his journey; while Hanumān came back and told the Lord of Angada's love, which filled the Lord with ecstatic delight. Harder far than adamant and softer than a flower is the heart of Śrī Rāma, O king of the birds, (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi,): tell me, who can know it?

(19 A—C)

चौ०—पुनि कृपाल लियो बोलि निषादा । दीन्हे भूषन बसन प्रसादा ॥
जाहु भवन मम सुमिरन करेहू । मन क्रम बचन धर्म अनुसरेहू ॥ १ ॥
तुम्ह मम सखा भरत सम भ्राता । सदा रहेहु पुर आवत जाता ॥
बचन सुनत उपजा सुख भारी । परेउ चरन भरि लोचन बारी ॥ २ ॥
चरन नलिन उर धरि गृह आवा । प्रभु सुभाउ परिजनन्हि सुनावा ॥
रघुपति चरित देखि पुरबासी । पुनि पुनि कहहिं धन्य सुखरासी ॥ ३ ॥
राम राज बैठें त्रैलोका । हरषित भए गए सब सोका ॥
बयरु न कर काहू सन कोई । राम प्रताप बिषमता खोई ॥ ४ ॥

Next the All-merciful summoned the Niṣāda chief (Guha) and presented him with jewels and raiment as a token of His pleasure. "Now return to your home; but remember Me and follow the dictates of religion in

thought, word and deed. You, My friend, are as much My brother as Bharata; you must continue to visit the capital every now and then." Guha was immensely gratified to hear these words; he fell at the Lord's feet, his eyes full of tears. Enshrining an image of His lotus feet in his heart he returned home and told his kinsmen of the Lord's amiable disposition. Witnessing the doings of Srī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) the citizens repeatedly said, "Blessed is the All-blissful Lord!" Srī Rama's installation to the throne brought joy to all the three spheres and ended all their sorrows. No one bore enmity to another: Srī Rama's glory had obliterated all disharmony. (1—4)

दो०—बरनाश्रम निज निज धरम निरत बेद पथ लोग ।
चलहिं सदा पावहिं सुखहि नहिं भय सोक न रोग ॥ २० ॥

Devoted to duty each according to his own caste and stage of life, the people trod the path of the Vedas and enjoyed happiness. They knew no fear, nor sorrow nor disease. (20)

चौ०—दैहिक दैविक भौतिक तापा । राम राज नहिं काहुहि ब्यापा ॥
सब नर करहिं परस्पर प्रीती । चलहिं स्वधर्म निरत श्रुति नीती ॥ १ ॥
चारिउ चरन धर्म जग माहीं । पूरि रहा सपनेहुँ अघ नाहीं ॥
राम भगति रत नर अरु नारी । सकल परम गति के अधिकारी ॥ २ ॥
अल्पमृत्यु नहिं कवनिउ पीरा । सब सुंदर सब बिरुज सरीरा ॥
नहिं दरिद्र कोउ दुखी न दीना । नहिं कोउ अबुध न लच्छनहीना ॥ ३ ॥
सब निर्दंभ धर्मरत पुनी । नर अरु नारि चतुर सब गुनी ॥
सब गुनग्य पंडित सब ग्यानी । सब कृतग्य नहिं कपट सयानी ॥ ४ ॥

In the whole of Srī Rama's dominions there was none who suffered from affliction of any kind—whether of the body, or proceeding from divine or supernatural agencies or that caused by another living being. All men loved one another; each followed one's prescribed duty, conformably to the precepts of the Vedas. Dharma with its four pillars (viz., truth, purity—both external and internal—, compassion and charity) reigned everywhere throughout the world; no one even dreamt of sin. Men and women alike were devoted to Srī Rama's worship and all were qualified for final beatitude. There was no premature death nor suffering of any kind; everyone was comely and sound of body. No one was destitute, afflicted or miserable; no one was stupid or devoid of auspicious marks. All were unaffectedly good, pious and virtuous; all were clever and accomplished—both men and women. Everyone recognized the merits of others and was learned and wise; nay, everyone acknowledged the services and benefits received from others and there was no guileful prudence. (1—4)

दो०—राम राज नभगेस सुनु सचराचर जग माहिं ।
काल कर्म सुभाव गुन कृत दुख काहुहि नाहिं ॥ २१ ॥

Listen, O king of the birds, (continues Kākabhusundi,) during Srī Rama's reign there was not a creature in this world, animate or inanimate, that was liable to any of the sufferings attributable to time, past conduct, personal temperament and character. (21)

चौ०—भूमि सप्त सागर मेखला । एक भूप रघुपति कोसला ॥
भुअन अनेक रोम प्रति जासू । यह प्रभुता कछु बहुत न तासू ॥ १ ॥
सो महिमा समुझत प्रभु केरी । यह बरनत हीनता घनेरी ॥
सोउ महिमा खगेस जिन्ह जानी । फिरि एहिं चरित तिन्हहुँ रति मानी ॥ २ ॥
सोउ जाने कर फल यह लीला । कहहिं महा मुनिबर दमसीला ॥
राम राज कर सुख संपदा । बरनि न सकइ फनीस सारदा ॥ ३ ॥
सब उदार सब पर उपकारी । बिप्र चरन सेवक नर नारी ॥
एकनारि ब्रत रत सब झारी । ते मन बच क्रम पति हितकारी ॥ ४ ॥

Śrī Rama (the Lord of the Raghus), who reigned in Ayodhya, was the undisputed sovereign of the entire globe girdled by the seven oceans. This lordship (of the entire globe) was nothing great for Him every hair-hole in whose (Cosmic) body contains myriads of universes. To him who has realized such infinite greatness of the Lord, even this description (viz., to speak of Him as the sovereign of the entire globe) will sound highly disparaging. But even those, O king of the birds, (continues Kakabhusundi) who have realized the greatness of the Lord (as indicated above) have turned round and conceived a fondness for this story of the Lord. For the immediate perception of such exploits of the Lord is the reward of knowing His infinite greatness : so declare the greatest of sages that have subdued their senses. The happiness and prosperity of Śrī Rama's reign were more than even Sesa (the serpent-god) and Sarada (the goddess of learning) could describe. All were generous and all beneficent; men ond women alike were devoted to the feet of the Brahmans. Every husband was pledged to a vow of monogamy and the wives too were devoted to their husband in thought, word and deed. (1—4)

दो०—दंड जतिन्ह कर भेद जहँ नर्तक नृत्य समाज ।
जीतहु मनहि सुनिअ अस रामचंद्र कें राज ॥ २२ ॥

'Daṇḍa'* was never seen save in the hands of the recluse and 'Bheda' too had ceased to exist except among the dancers in a dancing party. Even so the order 'Conquer !' was heard only with reference to the mind throughout the realm of Śrī Rāmachandra. (22)

* Our scriptures have recognised four common methods of persuasion, viz., (1) Sama (argument or expostulation), (2) Dāna (inducement in the shape of gift etc.), (3) Danda (use of force or corporal punishment) and (4) Bheda (sowing seeds of dissension); it is the last two of the above four methods that are evidently referred to in this context. There is, however, a pun on these words. The word 'Danda' when used with reference to a recluse denotes the staff which he is required to carry as a symbol of self-restraint; and 'Bheda' ordinarily means variety. The poet thus seeks to convey through this verse that during Śrī Rāma's reign such absolute harmony and moral uprightness prevailed throughout the world that the last two methods of persuasion had become entirely obsolete. The word 'Daṇḍa' was understood only in the sense of a staff carried by a Sannyāsi and the word 'Bheda' merely conveyed the variety of notes and cadence displayed in music and dancing. Similarly, since there was no enemy to conquer, the only object to be conquered was the mind.

चौ०—फूलहिं फरहिं सदा तरु कानन । रहहिं एक सँग गज पंचानन ॥
खग मृग सहज बयरु बिसराई । सबन्हि परस्पर प्रीति बढ़ाई ॥ १ ॥
कूजहिं खग मृग नाना बृंदा । अभय चरहिं बन करहिं अनंदा ॥
सीतल सुरभि पवन बह मंदा । गुंजत अलि लै चलि मकरंदा ॥ २ ॥
लता बिटप मागें मधु चवहीं । मनभावतो धेनु पय स्रवहीं ॥
ससि संपन्न सदा रह धरनी । त्रेताँ भइ कृतजुग कै करनी ॥ ३ ॥
प्रगटीं गिरिन्ह बिबिधि मनि खानी । जगदातमा भूप जग जानी ॥
सरिता सकल बहहिं बर बारी । सीतल अमल स्वाद सुखकारी ॥ ४ ॥
सागर निज मरजादाँ रहहीं । डारहिं रत्न तटन्हि नर लहहीं ॥
सरसिज संकुल सकल तड़ागा । अति प्रसन्न दस दिसा बिभागा ॥ ५ ॥

Trees in the forest blossomed and bore fruit throughout the year; the elephant and the lion lived together as friends. Nay, birds and beasts of every description had forgotten their natural animosities and developed friendly relations with one another. Birds sang and beasts fearlessly moved about in the woods in distinct herds, making merry all the time. The air breathed cool, soft and fragrant; bees hummed even as they moved about laden with honey. Creepers and trees dropped honey to those who asked for it; cows yielded milk to one's heart's content. The earth was ever clothed with crops; even in the Tretā age the conditions of the Satyayuga prevailed. Conscious of the fact that the Ruler of the earth was no other than the Universal Spirit, the mountains brought to light their mines containing jewels of every description. Every river carried in it excellent water—cool, transparent and pleasant to the taste. The oceans kept within their bounds and scattered jewels on their shores for men to gather. Ponds were all thick with lotuses and every quarter was clear and bright. (1—5)

दो०—बिधु महि पूर मयूखन्हि रबि तप जेतनेहि काज ।
मागें बारिद देहिं जल रामचंद्र कें राज ॥ २३ ॥

The moon flooded the earth with her rays, while the sun shone just as much as was necessary. Similarly clouds poured forth showers for the mere asking so long as Śrī Rāmachandra wielded the sceptre. (23)

चौ०—कोटिन्ह बाजिमेध प्रभु कीन्हे । दान अनेक द्विजन्ह कहँ दीन्हे ॥
श्रुति पथ पालक धर्म धुरंधर । गुनातीत अरु भोग पुरंदर ॥ १ ॥
पति अनुकूल सदा रह सीता । सोभा खानि सुसील बिनीता ॥
जानति कृपासिंधु प्रभुताई । सेवति चरन कमल मन लाई ॥ २ ॥
जद्यपि गृहँ सेवक सेवकिनी । बिपुल सदा सेवा बिधि गुनी ॥
निज कर गृह परिचरजा करई । रामचंद्र आयसु अनुसरई ॥ ३ ॥
जेहि बिधि कृपासिंधु सुख मानइ । सोइ कर श्री सेवा बिधि जानइ ॥
कौसल्यादि सासु गृह माहीं । सेवइ सबन्हि मान मद नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥
उमा रमा ब्रह्मादि बंदिता । जगदंबा संततमनिंदिता ॥ ५ ॥

The Lord performed myriads of horse-sacrifices and bestowed innumerable gifts on the Brahmans. The Defender of the Vedic usage and the champion of righteousness, He transcended the three modes of Prakṛti (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas) and was another Indra (the lord of paradise) so far as enjoyment was concerned. A mine of beauty, virtuous and meek, Sītā was ever devoted to Her lord. She knew the greatness of the All-merciful Lord and adored His lotus feet with a devoted heart. Although there were many man-servants and maid-servants in Her palace, all expert in the art of service, She did all household work with Her own hands and carried out the behests of Śrī Rāmachandra. Sītā invariably did what would afford delight to the All-merciful, conversant as She was with the art of service. Devoid of pride and conceit, She waited upon Kausalyā and all the other mothers-in-law in the palace. Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) Sītā was no other than Goddess Ramā (Lakṣmī), the Mother of the universe, who is adored even by Brahmā and other gods and is ever flawless. (1–5)

दो०—जासु कृपा कटाच्छु सुर चाहत चितव न सोइ।
राम पदारबिंद रति करति सुभावहि खोइ ॥ २४ ॥

The same Lakṣmī whose benign look is craved by the gods but who never casts a glance at them constantly loves Śrī Rāma's lotus feet, forgetting Her natural majesty. (24)

चौ०—सेवहिं सानकूल सब भाई। राम चरन रति अति अधिकाई ॥
प्रभु मुख कमल बिलोकत रहहीं। कबहुँ कृपाल हमहि कछु कहहीं ॥ १ ॥
राम करहिं भ्रातन्ह पर प्रीती। नाना भाँति सिखावहिं नीती ॥
हरषित रहहिं नगर के लोगा। करहिं सकल सुर दुर्लभ भोगा ॥ २ ॥
अहनिसि बिधिहि मनावत रहहीं। श्रीरघुबीर चरन रति चहहीं ॥
दुइ सुत सुंदर सीताँ जाए। लव कुस बेद पुरानन्ह गाए ॥ ३ ॥
दोउ बिजई बिनई गुन मंदिर। हरि प्रतिबिंब मनहुँ अति सुंदर ॥
दुइ दुइ सुत सब भ्रातन्ह केरे। भए रूप गुन सील घनेरे ॥ ४ ॥

All the younger brothers served the Lord with great fidelity; for their love for Śrī Rāma knew no bounds. They ever kept gazing on His lotus face in the hope that the benign Lord might give some order to them at any moment. Śrī Rāma too loved His younger brothers and taught them wisdom of every kind. The citizens led a happy life and enjoyed all sorts of pleasures which even gods could scarcely obtain. Day and night they prayed to God and sought the boon of devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line). Sītā gave birth to two pretty sons, Lava and Kuśa by name, who have figured in the Vedas and Purāṇas. Both these boys were victorious in battle, modest, accomplished and handsome, the very images as it were of Śrī Hari (Rāma). Śrī Rāma's other brothers too had two sons each, pre-eminent in comeliness of form, merit and virtue. (1–4)

दो०—ग्यान गिरा गोतीत अज माया मन गुन पार।
सोइ सच्चिदानंद घन कर नर चरित उदार ॥ २५ ॥

The same Brahma who is beyond all knowledge, speech and sense-perception, nay, who is unborn and transcends Māya (Prakṛti or Matter), the mind and the modes of Prakṛti and is truth, knowledge and bliss solidified, exhibited the ideal behaviour of a human being. (25)

चौ०—प्रातकाल सरऊ करि मज्जन । बैठहिं सभाँ संग द्विज सज्जन ॥
बेद पुरान बसिष्ट बखानहिं । सुनहिं राम जद्यपि सब जानहिं ॥ १ ॥
अनुजन्ह संजुत भोजन करहीं । देखि सकल जननीं सुख भरहीं ॥
भरत सत्रुहन दोनउ भाई । सहित पवनसुत उपबन जाईं ॥ २ ॥
बूझहिं बैठि राम गुन गाहा । कह हनुमान सुमति अवगाहा ॥
सुनत बिमल गुन अति सुख पावहिं । बहुरि बहुरि करि बिनय कहावहिं ॥ ३ ॥
सब कें गृह गृह होहिं पुराना । राम चरित पावन बिधि नाना ॥
नर अरु नारि राम गुन गानहिं । करहिं दिवस निसि जात न जानहिं ॥ ४ ॥

After taking a bath in the Sarayū early in the morning the Lord sat in an assembly of Brahmans and holy men. The sage Vasistha expounded the Vedas and Purānas, while Śrī Rāma listened to the exposition, even though He knew everything Himself. He took His meals with His younger brothers and the sight filled all the mothers with joy. The two brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna, would accompany the son of the wind-god to some grove, where they would sit and ask Hanumān to expatiate on Śrī Rāma's virtues, and Hanumān would plunge his sound intellect into the ocean of His virtues and then recount them. The two brothers derived much joy from the discourse on His immaculate virtues and with much entreaty had it repeated again and again. Everywhere—in every house the people recited the Purānas and narrated Śrī Rāma's holy exploits of a diverse character. Men and women alike joined in hymning Śrī Rāma's praises and days and nights passed on unnoticed. (1—4)

दो०—अवधपुरी बासिन्ह कर सुख संपदा समाज ।
सहस सेष नहिं कहि सकहिं जहँ नृप राम बिराज ॥ २६ ॥

Not a thousand Seṣas could tell all the happiness and prosperity of the people of Ayodhyā, where Śrī Rāma reigned as King. (26)

चौ०—नारदादि सनकादि मुनीसा । दरसन लागि कोसलाधीसा ॥
दिन प्रति सकल अजोध्या आवहिं । देखि नगरु बिरागु बिसरावहिं ॥ १ ॥
जातरूप मनि रचित अटारीं । नाना रंग रुचिर गच ढारीं ॥
पुर चहुँ पास कोट अति सुंदर । रचे कँगूरा रंग रंग बर ॥ २ ॥
नव ग्रह निकर अनीक बनाई । जनु घेरी अमरावति आई ॥
महि बहु रंग रचित गच काँचा । जो बिलोकि मुनिबर मन नाचा ॥ ३ ॥
धवल धाम ऊपर नभ चुंबत । कलस मनहुँ रबि ससि दुति निंदत ॥
बहु मनि रचित झरोखा भ्राजहिं । गृह गृह प्रति मनि दीप बिराजहिं ॥ ४ ॥

All great sages like Nārada, Sanaka and others came to Ayodhyā every day to have a sight of the Lord of Kosala, and forgot all their indifference to the world the moment they saw the city, with its attics built of gold and jewels

and having splendid pavements laid in diverse colours. A most beautiful boundary wall with its battlements painted in different colours enclosed the city on all sides, as though the nine planets had mustered a large army and besieged Amarāvatī (Indra's capital). The ground (the streets and squares etc.) was so beautifully paved with crystals of various colours that the mind of the greatest sages would be enraptured at the sight. The white palaces were so high as to reach the skies; their shining pinnacles put to shame as it were the effulgence of the sun and the moon. Latticed windows made of diverse precious stones shone here and there; while every house was lit up with jewels that served as lamps. (1–4)

छं०—मनि दीप राजहिं भवन भ्राजहिं देहरीं बिद्रुम रची ।
मनि खंभ भीति बिरंचि बिरची कनक मनि मरकत खची ॥
सुंदर मनोहर मंदिरायत अजिर रुचिर फटिक रचे ।
प्रति द्वार द्वार कपाट पुरट बनाइ बहु बज्रन्हि खचे ॥

The mansions were illumined by jewels that served as so many lamps and had shining thresholds made of coral, pillars of jewels and walls of gold inlaid with emeralds, which were as lovely as though they had been built by the Creator (Brahmā) himself. Beautiful, charming and commodious as the palaces were, they had their courtyards inworked with crystal, and every gate thereof was provided with doors of gold embossed with diamonds.

दो०—चारु चित्रसाला गृह गृह प्रति लिखे बनाइ ।
राम चरित जे निरख मुनि ते मन लेहिं चोराइ ॥ २७ ॥

Every house was equipped with a hall adorned with lovely frescos which had Śrī Rama's exploits reproduced in such beautiful colours that they would ravish the soul of a sage who looked at them. (27)

चौ०—सुमन बाटिका सबहिं लगाईं । बिबिध भाँति करि जतन बनाईं ॥
लता ललित बहु जाति सुहाईं । फूलहिं सदा बसंत कि नाईं ॥ १ ॥
गुंजत मधुकर मुखर मनोहर । मारुत त्रिबिधि सदा बह सुंदर ॥
नाना खग बालकन्हि जिआए । बोलत मधुर उड़ात सुहाए ॥ २ ॥
मोर हंस सारस पारावत । भवननि पर सोभा अति पावत ॥
जहँ तहँ देखहिं निज परिछाहीं । बहु बिधि कूजहिं नृत्य कराहीं ॥ ३ ॥
सुक सारिका पढ़ावहिं बालक । कहहु राम रघुपति जनपालक ॥
राज दुआर सकल बिधि चारू । बीथीं चौहट रुचिर बजारू ॥ ४ ॥

Everyone had a flower garden planted in a characteristic design and trimmed with the greatest care, in which beautiful and lovely creepers of every variety blossomed all the year round as in the vernal season. Bees hummed in a pleasant strain and a delightful breeze breathed cool, soft and fragrant. Birds of all kinds, reared by the children, sang in melodious notes and looked graceful in their flight. Peacocks, swans, cranes and pigeons presented a most

lovely sight on the houses, warbling and dancing in a variety of ways at the sight of their own shadow reflected everywhere (on the glossy surface of the roofs and balconies etc.). The children taught parrots and *Mainas* to repeat the words "Rāma, Raghupati (the Lord of the Raghus), the Protector of His devotees." The gates of the royal palace were magnificent in every way; the streets, cross-roads and bazars were all splendid. (1—4)

छं०—बाजार रुचिर न बनइ बरनत बस्तु बिनु गथ पाइए ।
जहँ भूप रमानिवास तहँ की संपदा किमि गाइए ॥
बैठे बजाज सराफ बनिक अनेक मनहुँ कुबेर ते ।
सब सुखी सब सच्चरित सुंदर नारि नर सिसु जरठ जे ॥

The bazars were splendid beyond description; things could be had without any consideration there. How can anyone describe the wealth of the city where the Abode of Lakṣmī Himself reigned as King? The cloth-merchants, bankers and other dealers sat at their shops like so many Kuberas (gods of riches). All men and women, children and aged folk alike were happy, all of good conduct and comely in appearance.

दो०—उत्तर दिसि सरजू बह निर्मल जल गंभीर ।
बाँधे घाट मनोहर स्वल्प पंक नहिं तीर ॥ २८ ॥

To the north (of the city) flowed the deep and limpid stream of the Sarayū with a line of charming ghats and no trace of mud at the bank. (28)

चौ०—दूरि फराक रुचिर सो घाटा । जहँ जल पिअहिं बाजि गज ठाटा ॥
पनिघट परम मनोहर नाना । तहाँ न पुरुष करहिं अस्नाना ॥ १ ॥
राजघाट सब बिधि सुंदर बर । मज्जहिं तहाँ बरन चारिउ नर ॥
तीर तीर देवन्ह के मंदिर । चहुँ दिसि तिन्ह के उपबन सुंदर ॥ २ ॥
कहुँ कहुँ सरिता तीर उदासी । बसहिं ग्यान रत मुनि संन्यासी ॥
तीर तीर तुलसिका सुहाई । बृंद बृंद बहु मुनिन्ह लगाई ॥ ३ ॥
पुर सोभा कछु बरनि न जाई । बाहेर नगर परम रुचिराई ॥
देखत पुरी अखिल अघ भागा । बन उपबन बापिका तड़ागा ॥ ४ ॥

Apart from the other ghats and situated at some distance from them was the fine ghat where multitudes of horses and elephants went to drink. There were numerous most charming ghats for women to take water from, where men did not bathe. The best of all and beautiful in every way was the royal ghat, where men of all the four castes could bathe. All along the bank stood temples sacred to the gods and surrounded by lovely groves. Here and there on the river bank dwelt sages and recluses unconcerned with the world and devoted to spiritual wisdom. All along the bank stood in clusters many a lovely Tulasī plant reared by hermits. The splendour of the city defied all description; its outskirts too were most picturesque. The very sight of the city with its groves and gardens, wells and ponds, drove away all one's sins.

(1—4)

छं०—बापीं तड़ाग अनूप कूप मनोहरायत सोहहीं ।
सोपान सुंदर नीर निर्मल देखि सुर मुनि मोहहीं ॥
बहु रंग कंज अनेक खग कूजहिं मधुप गुंजारहीं ।
आराम रम्य पिकादि खग रव जनु पथिक हंकारहीं ॥

Its peerless ponds and tanks and charming and spacious wells looked so beautiful with their elegant flights of steps and transparent water that even gods and sages were fascinated by their sight. The lakes were adorned with many-coloured lotuses and resounded with the cooing of the numerous birds and the humming of the bees; and the delightful gardens seemed to invite the passers-by through the notes of the cuckoos and other birds.

दो०—रमानाथ जहँ राजा सो पुर बरनि कि जाइ ।
अनिमादिक सुख संपदा रहीं अवध सब छाइ ॥ २९ ॥

Is it ever possible to describe the city of which Ramā's lord was the King? Aṇimā (the power of assuming atomic size) and all other superhuman powers and even so joys and riches of every kind stayed in Ayodhyā for ever. (29)

चौ०—जहँ तहँ नर रघुपति गुन गावहिं । बैठि परसपर इहइ सिखावहिं ॥
भजहु प्रनत प्रतिपालक रामहि । सोभा सील रूप गुन धामहि ॥ १ ॥
जलज बिलोचन स्यामल गातहि । पलक नयन इव सेवक त्रातहि ॥
धृत सर रुचिर चाप तूनीरहि । संत कंज बन रबि रनधीरहि ॥ २ ॥
काल कराल ब्याल खगराजहि । नमत राम अकाम ममता जहि ॥
लोभ मोह मृगजूथ किरातहि । मनसिज करि हरि जन सुखदातहि ॥ ३ ॥
संसय सोक निबिड़ तम भानुहि । दनुज गहन घन दहन कृसानुहि ॥
जनकसुता समेत रघुबीरहि । कस न भजहु भंजन भव भीरहि ॥ ४ ॥
बहु बासना मसक हिम रासिहि । सदा एकरस अज अबिनासिहि ॥
मुनि रंजन भंजन महि भारहि । तुलसिदास के प्रभुहि उदारहि ॥ ५ ॥

Everywhere men sang the praises of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), and even as they sat this is how they exhorted one another: "Worship Śrī Rāma, the Protector of the suppliant, the home of elegance, amiability, beauty and goodness, who has lotus-like eyes and swarthy limbs, who looks after His servants even as the eyelids guard the eye-balls, who is armed with a splendid bow, arrows and quiver and is staunch in battle, who delights the saints even as the sun brings joy to a bed of lotuses, who is a Garuḍa (the king of the birds) to devour the dreadful serpent in the shape of Death, who destroys the feeling of mineness the moment a person bows to Him in a disinterested spirit, and who is a hunter to kill the herd of deer in the shape of greed and infatuation, a lion to quell the elephant of concupiscence, the delight of His servants, a sun to scatter the thick darkness of doubt and sorrow, and a fire to consume the dense forest of the demon race. Oh, why should you not adore the Hero of Raghu's line, who is ever accompanied by Janaka's Daughter, who

dispels the fear of transmigration, who plays the role of frost to destroy mosquitoes in the disguise of manifold latent desires, who is ever unchangeable, unborn and imperishable, the delight of the sages, the reliever of the earth's burdens, the munificent lord of Tulasīdāsa." (1—5)

दो०—एहि बिधि नगर नारि नर करहिं राम गुन गान ।
सानुकूल सब पर रहहिं संतत कृपानिधान ॥ ३० ॥

In this way the men and women of the city sang Śrī Rāma's praises and the All-merciful was ever propitious to all. (30)

चौ०—जब ते राम प्रताप खगेसा । उदित भयउ अति प्रबल दिनेसा ॥
पूरि प्रकास रहेउ तिहुँ लोका । बहुतेन्ह सुख बहुतन मन सोका ॥ १ ॥
जिन्हहि सोक ते कहउँ बखानी । प्रथम अबिद्या निसा नसानी ॥
अघ उलूक जहँ तहाँ लुकाने । काम क्रोध कैरव सकुचाने ॥ २ ॥
बिबिध कर्म गुन काल सुभाऊ । ए चकोर सुख लहहिं न काऊ ॥
मत्सर मान मोह मद चोरा । इन्ह कर हुनर न कवनिहुँ ओरा ॥ ३ ॥
धरम तड़ाग ग्यान बिग्याना । ए पंकज बिकसे बिधि नाना ॥
सुख संतोष बिराग बिबेका । बिगत सोक ए कोक अनेका ॥ ४ ॥

From the time, O king of the birds, (continues Kākabhuśuṇḍi,) the most dazzling sun of Śrī Rāma's glory appeared on the horizon the three spheres were all flooded with light, which brought delight to many and sorrow to many others. First I enumerate at length those to whom it caused sorrow. To begin with, the night of ignorance terminated; the owl-like sins hid themselves wherever they could; the white lily in the shape of lust and anger closed. Chakora birds in the shape of activities of various kinds, the phenomenal existence, Time and Nature never rejoiced; thieves like jealousy, pride, infatuation and arrogance had no occasion to display their skill in any quarter; lotuses of every description in the shape of knowledge and realization opened in the pond of piety. Happiness, contentment, dispassion and discernment, like so many Chakravāka birds, were rid of sorrow. (1—4)

दो०—यह प्रताप रबि जाकें उर जब करइ प्रकास ।
पछिले बाढ़हिं प्रथम जे कहे ते पावहिं नास ॥ ३१ ॥

When the sun of Śrī Rāma's glory illumines the heart of an individual, the qualities enumerated in the end grow while those mentioned in the beginning die away. (31)

चौ०—भ्रातन्ह सहित रामु एक बारा । संग परम प्रिय पवनकुमारा ॥
सुंदर उपबन देखन गए । सब तरु कुसुमित पल्लव नए ॥ १ ॥
जानि समय सनकादिक आए । तेज पुंज गुन सील सुहाए ॥
ब्रह्मानंद सदा लयलीना । देखत बालक बहुकालीना ॥ २ ॥
रूप धरें जनु चारिउ बेदा । समदरसी मुनि बिगत बिभेदा ॥
आसा बसन ब्यसन यह तिन्हहीं । रघुपति चरित होइ तहँ सुनहीं ॥ ३ ॥

तहाँ रहे सनकादि भवानी। जहँ घटसंभव मुनिबर ग्यानी॥
राम कथा मुनिबर बहु बरनी। ग्यान जोनि पावक जिमि अरनी॥ ४॥

One day, Śrī Rāma and His brothers, accompanied by His most favourite Hanumān, went to see a beautiful grove, where the trees were all blossoming and had put on fresh leaves. Finding it a good opportunity the sage Sanaka* and his three brothers (Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra) arrived there. They were all embodiments of spiritual glow, adorned with amiability and other noble qualities and constantly absorbed in the ecstasy of union with Brahma; though infants to all appearance, they are aeons old. The sages looked upon all with the same eye and were above all diversity; it seemed as if the four Vedas had each assumed a bodily form. They had no covering on their body except the quarters; and their only hobby was to hear the recital of Srī Rama's exploits wherever it was carried on. Sanaka and his brothers, O Bhavanī, (continues Lord Śiva,) had stayed in the hermitage of the enlightened sage Agastya and the noble sage had narrated to them many a story relating to Srī Rama, which are productive of wisdom in the same way as the friction of two pieces of wood produces fire. (1—4)

दो०—देखि राम मुनि आवत हरषि दंडवत कीन्ह।
स्वागत पूँछि पीत पट प्रभु बैठन कहँ दीन्ह॥ ३२॥

Śrī Rāma saw the sages approaching and gladly prostrated Himself before them. And after an enquiry about their health etc. the Lord spread His own yellow scarf for them to squat on. (32)

चौ०—कीन्ह दंडवत तीनिउँ भाई। सहित पवनसुत सुख अधिकाई॥
मुनि रघुपति छबि अतुल बिलोकी। भए मगन मन सके न रोकी॥ १॥
स्यामल गात सरोरुह लोचन। सुंदरता मंदिर भव मोचन॥
एकटक रहे निमेष न लावहिं। प्रभु कर जोरें सीस नवावहिं॥ २॥
तिन्ह कै दसा देखि रघुबीरा। स्रवत नयन जल पुलक सरीरा॥
कर गहि प्रभु मुनिबर बैठारे। परम मनोहर बचन उचारे॥ ३॥
आजु धन्य मैं सुनहु मुनीसा। तुम्हरें दरस जाहिं अघ खीसा॥
बड़े भाग पाइब सतसंगा। बिनहिं प्रयास होहिं भव भंगा॥ ४॥

All His three brothers (Bharata, Laksmana and Satrughna) then prostrated themselves along with Hanuman and everyone felt very happy. The sages were beside themselves with rapture on beholding the incomparable beauty of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). They remained gazing with unwinking eyes on the Lord, who is the abode of comeliness and brings about release from worldly existence and has a swarthy form and lotus-eyes. The Lord in His turn bowed His head with joined palms. When the Hero of Raghu's line perceived their condition, His eyes too streamed with tears and every hair on His body stood on its end. Taking

*The sage Sanaka and his three brothers are the first progeny of Brahmā during the present creation, and therefore the eldest of all creation. They are perpetual celibates and are still living in the abode of Brahmā, their present age being computed at 1,95,00,00,000 odd years.

them by the hand, the Lord seated them and addressed them in most charming words: "Listen, great sages; I am indeed blessed today. By your very sight all one's sins are wiped out. By extreme good luck one is able to secure the company of saints; for through such communion the chain of births and deaths is broken without the least exertion. (1–4)

दो०—संत संग अपबर्ग कर कामी भव कर पंथ।
कहहिं संत कबि कोबिद श्रुति पुरान सदग्रंथ ॥ ३३ ॥

"Communion with saints is the road to emancipation, while that of the sensualist paves the way for transmigration: so declare the saints themselves, the men of wisdom and the learned, as well as the Vedas, Purāṇas and other real scriptures." (33)

चौ०—सुनि प्रभु बचन हरषि मुनि चारी। पुलकित तन अस्तुति अनुसारी ॥
जय भगवंत अनंत अनामय। अनघ अनेक एक करुनामय ॥ १ ॥
जय निर्गुन जय जय गुन सागर। सुख मंदिर सुंदर अति नागर ॥
जय इंदिरा रमन जय भूधर। अनुपम अज अनादि सोभाकर ॥ २ ॥
ग्यान निधान अमान मानप्रद। पावन सुजस पुरान बेद बद ॥
तग्य कृतग्य अग्यता भंजन। नाम अनेक अनाम निरंजन ॥ ३ ॥
सर्ब सर्बगत सर्ब उरालय। बससि सदा हम कहुँ परिपालय ॥
द्वंद बिपति भव फंद बिभंजय। हृदि बसि राम काम मद गंजय ॥ ४ ॥

The four sages were all rejoiced to hear the Lord's words and with every hair on their body standing erect they proceeded to hymn His praises: "Glory to the Almighty Lord, who is infinite immutable and sinless, who is one as well as many and all-gracious! Glory to the Lord who is beyond the modes of Prakṛti! Glory, glory to the Ocean of goodness, the Abode of bliss, handsome and most urbane in manners. Glory to Indirā's (Lakṣmī's) Spouse! Glory to the Supporter of the earth, peerless, unborn and dateless, a mine of elegance. A storehouse of wisdom that You are, You are free from pride and yet bestow honour on others: the Vedas and Puranas sing Your sanctifying glory. Knower of Truth, You acknowledge the services of Your devotees and destroy their ignorance. Untainted by Māyā, You bear numberless names and are yet beyond all. You are manifest as all, pervade all and dwell in the heart of all; therefore, protect us every moment. Break asunder the bonds in the form of pairs of opposites (such as heat and cold, joy and sorrow, etc.), adversity and mundane existence; and abiding in our heart, O Rāma, eradicate our sensuality and vanity. (1–4)

दो०—परमानंद कृपायतन मन परिपूरन काम।
प्रेम भगति अनपायनी देहु हमहि श्रीराम ॥ ३४ ॥

"You are supreme bliss personified and the abode of mercy and fulfil the desire of Your devotees' heart. Pray, grant me the boon of unceasing love and devotion (to Your feet), O gracefull Rāma. (34)

चौ०—देहु भगति रघुपति अति पावनि । त्रिबिधि ताप भव दाप नसावनि ॥
प्रनत काम सुरधेनु कलपतरु । होइ प्रसन्न दीजै प्रभु यह बरु ॥ १ ॥
भव बारिधि कुंभज रघुनायक । सेवत सुलभ सकल सुख दायक ॥
मन संभव दारुन दुख दारय । दीनबंधु समता बिस्तारय ॥ २ ॥
आस त्रास इरिषादि निवारक । बिनय बिबेक बिरति बिस्तारक ॥
भूप मौलि मनि मंडन धरनी । देहि भगति संसृति सरि तरनी ॥ ३ ॥
मुनि मन मानस हंस निरंतर । चरन कमल बंदित अज संकर ॥
रघुकुल केतु सेतु श्रुति रच्छक । काल करम सुभाउ गुन भच्छक ॥ ४ ॥
तारन तरन हरन सब दूषन । तुलसिदास प्रभु त्रिभुवन भूषन ॥ ५ ॥

"Bestow on us, O Lord of the Raghus, that most sanctifying devotion which destroys the threefold agony and the turmoils of transmigration. A celestial cow and a wish-yielding tree to satisfy the desires of the suppliant, be propitious, my lord, and grant this boon. A veritable jar-born sage (Agastya) to suck up the ocean of mundane existence, O Chief of the Raghus, You are easy of access to those who adore You and bestow all blessings on them. Put an end to the terrible sufferings caused by the mind and diffuse even-mindedness in us, O befriender of the meek. O banisher of hope (of gratifying oneself through self-indulgence), fear, jealousy etc. and propagator of humility, right judgment and dispassion, crest-jewel of earthly kings, and ornament of the globe, grant us devotion to Your feet, which serves as a boat to take one across the river of mundane existence. A swan that You are, constantly residing in the Mānasa lake of the sages' mind, Your lotus feet are adored even by Brahmā and Lord Śankara. Glory of Raghu's race, custodian of the Vedic laws, devourer of time, destiny, Prakṛti (Primordial Nature) and the three Guṇas You are both the boatman and the boat to take Your devotees across the ocean of metempsychosis and the stealer of all vices, the lord of Tulasīdāsa, the jewel of the three spheres."

(1—5)

दो०—बार बार अस्तुति करि प्रेम सहित सिरु नाइ ।
ब्रह्म भवन सनकादि गे अति अभीष्ट बर पाइ ॥ ३५ ॥

Having thus extolled the Lord again and again, Sanaka and his three brothers lovingly bowed their head and, having obtained their most cherished boon, returned to Brahmā's abode. (35)

चौ०—सनकादिक बिधि लोक सिधाए । भ्रातन्ह राम चरन सिर नाए ॥
पूछत प्रभुहि सकल सकुचाहीं । चितवहिं सब मारुतसुत पाहीं ॥ १ ॥
सुनी चहहिं प्रभु मुख कै बानी । जो सुनि होइ सकल भ्रम हानी ॥
अंतरजामी प्रभु सभ जाना । बूझत कहहु काह हनुमाना ॥ २ ॥
जोरि पानि कह तब हनुमंता । सुनहु दीनदयाल भगवंता ॥
नाथ भरत कछु पूँछन चहहीं । प्रस्न करत मन सकुचत अहहीं ॥ ३ ॥
तुम्ह जानहु कपि मोर सुभाऊ । भरतहि मोहि कछु अंतर काऊ ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन भरत गहे चरना । सुनहु नाथ प्रनतारति हरना ॥ ४ ॥

When Sanaka and his brothers had left for Brahma's abode, the three brothers (Bharata, Laksmana and Satrughna) bowed their head at Srī Rama's feet; but being too modest themselves to interrogate the Lord, they all looked at the son of the wind-god. They wished to hear from the Lord's own mouth something which would eradicate all the misconceptions. The Lord, however, who regulates the internal feelings of all, came to know everything and enquired: "Tell me, Hanuman, what is the matter ?" Hanumān replied with joined palms, "Listen, O lord, compassionate as You are to the meek. Bharata, my lord, wishes to ask something; but he is too diffident at heart to put the question." "Hanuman, you know my disposition. Has there ever been any secrecy between Bharata and myself ?" On hearing the Lord's words Bharata clasped His feet. "Listen, my lord, reliever of the suppliant's agony:—

(1—4)

दो०—नाथ न मोहि संदेह कछु सपनेहुँ सोक न मोह ।
केवल कृपा तुम्हारिहि कृपानंद संदोह ॥ ३६ ॥

"I have no doubts whatever, my lord, nor have I ever known any dejection or infatuation even in a dream. It is all due to Your grace, O all-merciful and all-blissful Lord.

(36)

चौ०—करउँ कृपानिधि एक ढिठाई । मैं सेवक तुम्ह जन सुखदाई ॥
संतन्ह कै महिमा रघुराई । बहु बिधि बेद पुरानन्ह गाई ॥ १ ॥
श्रीमुख तुम्ह पुनि कीन्हि बड़ाई । तिन्ह पर प्रभुहि प्रीति अधिकाई ॥
सुना चहउँ प्रभु तिन्ह कर लच्छन । कृपासिंधु गुन ग्यान बिचच्छन ॥ २ ॥
संत असंत भेद बिलगाई । प्रनतपाल मोहि कहहु बुझाई ॥
संतन्ह के लच्छन सुनु भ्राता । अगनित श्रुति पुरान बिख्याता ॥ ३ ॥
संत असंतन्हि कै असि करनी । जिमि कुठार चंदन आचरनी ॥
काटइ परसु मलय सुनु भाई । निज गुन देइ सुगंध बसाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Yet, O storehouse of compassion, I make bold to make one submission, I being Your servant and You the delight of Your devotees. The glory of the saints, O Lord of the Raghus, has been sung in various ways by the Vedas and Puranas. You too have exalted them by Your own graceful mouth and my lord bears great affection for them. I would fain hear, my lord, their distinctive marks, O Ocean of compassion, conspicuous as You are by Your excellences and wisdom. O Protector of the suppliant, tell me clearly and severally the distinguishing traits of the good and the wicked." "Hear, brother, the characteristics of saints, which as told in the Vedas and Puranas are innumerable. The conduct of saints and the wicked is analogous to that of sandal-wood and the axe. Mark, brother: the axe cuts down a sandal-tree, while the latter in its turn perfumes the axe by imparting its virtue (fragrance) to it.

(1—4)

दो०—ताते सुर सीसन्ह चढ़त जग बल्लभ श्रीखंड ।
अनल दाहि पीटत घनहिं परसु बदन यह दंड ॥ ३७ ॥

"For this reason sandal-wood (in the form of paste) finds its way to the head of gods (their images) and is loved by the world so much; while the axe has its steel edge heated in the fire and beaten with a hammer as punishment. (37)

चौ०—बिषय अलंपट सील गुनाकर । पर दुख दुख सुख सुख देखे पर ॥
सम अभूतरिपु बिमद बिरागी । लोभामरष हरष भय त्यागी ॥ १ ॥
कोमलचित दीनन्ह पर दाया । मन बच क्रम मम भगति अमाया ॥
सबहि मानप्रद आपु अमानी । भरत प्रान सम मम ते प्रानी ॥ २ ॥
बिगत काम मम नाम परायन । सांति बिरति बिनती मुदितायन ॥
सीतलता सरलता मयत्री । द्विज पद प्रीति धर्म जनयत्री ॥ ३ ॥
ए सब लच्छन बसहिं जासु उर । जानेहु तात संत संतत फुर ॥
सम दम नियम नीति नहिं डोलहिं । परुष बचन कबहूँ नहिं बोलहिं ॥ ४ ॥

"Saints as a rule have no hankering for the pleasures of sense and are the very mines of amiability and other virtues. They grieve to see others in distress and rejoice at the sight of others' joy. They are even-minded and look upon none as their enemy. Free from vanity and passion, they are conquerers of greed, anger, joy and fear. Tender of heart and compassionate to the distressed, they cherish guileless devotion to Me in thought, word and deed; and giving honour to all, they are modest themselves. Such souls, Bharata, are dear to Me as life. Having no interested motive of their own they are devoted to My Name and are abodes of tranquillity, dispassion, humility and good humour. Again, know him for all time, dear brother, a genuine saint, whose heart is a home of all such noble qualities as placidity, guilelessness, friendliness and devotion to the feet of the Brahmans, which is the fountain of all virtues. They never swerve from the control of their mind and senses, religious observances and correct behaviour and never utter a harsh word. (1—4)

दो०—निंदा अस्तुति उभय सम ममता मम पद कंज ।
ते सज्जन मम प्रानप्रिय गुन मंदिर सुख पुंज ॥ ३८ ॥

"They who regard both obloquy and praise alike and who claim My lotus feet as their only possession,—such saintly souls are dear to Me as life and are veritable abodes of noble qualities and embodiments of bliss. (38)

चौ०—सुनहु असंतन्ह केर सुभाऊ । भूलेहुँ संगति करिअ न काऊ ॥
तिन्ह कर संग सदा दुखदाई । जिमि कपिलहि घालइ हरहाई ॥ १ ॥
खलन्ह हृदयँ अति ताप बिसेषी । जरहिं सदा पर संपति देखी ॥
जहँ कहुँ निंदा सुनहिं पराई । हरषहिं मनहुँ परी निधि पाई ॥ २ ॥
काम क्रोध मद लोभ परायन । निर्दय कपटी कुटिल मलायन ॥
बयरु अकारन सब काहू सों । जो कर हित अनहित ताहू सों ॥ ३ ॥
झूठइ लेना झूठइ देना । झूठइ भोजन झूठ चबेना ॥
बोलहिं मधुर बचन जिमि मोरा । खाइ महा अहि हृदय कठोरा ॥ ४ ॥

"Now hear the characteristics of the impious, association with whom should be scrupulously avoided; for their company ever brings woe, even as a wicked cow ruins by her company a cow of noble breed. The heart of the wicked suffers terrible agony; for they ever burn at the sight of others' prosperity. Wherever they hear others reviled, they feel delighted as though they had stumbled upon a treasure lying on the road. Devoted to sensuality, anger, arrogance and greed, they are merciless, deceitful, crooked and impure. They bear enmity towards all without rhyme or reason; nay, they behave inimically even with those who are actively kind to them. They are false in their dealings (lying is their stock-in-trade); nay, falsehood is their dinner and falsehood their breakfast (whatever they eat is intended to deceive others). They speak honeyed words just like the peacock, that has a stony heart and devours the most venomous snake. (1—4)

दो०—पर द्रोही पर दार रत पर धन पर अपबाद ।
ते नर पाँवर पापमय देह धरें मनुजाद ॥ ३९ ॥

"Malevolent by nature, they enjoy others' wives and others' wealth and take delight in slandering others. Such vile and sinful men are demons in human garb. (39)

चौ०—लोभइ ओढ़न लोभइ डासन । सिस्नोदर पर जमपुर त्रास न ॥
काहू की जौं सुनहिं बड़ाई । स्वास लेहिं जनु जूड़ी आई ॥ १ ॥
जब काहू कै देखहिं बिपती । सुखी भए मानहुँ जग नृपती ॥
स्वारथ रत परिवार बिरोधी । लंपट काम लोभ अति क्रोधी ॥ २ ॥
मातु पिता गुर बिप्र न मानहिं । आपु गए अरु घालहिं आनहिं ॥
करहिं मोह बस द्रोह परावा । संत संग हरि कथा न भावा ॥ ३ ॥
अवगुन सिंधु मंदमति कामी । बेद बिदूषक परधन स्वामी ॥
बिप्र द्रोह पर द्रोह बिसेषा । दंभ कपट जियँ धरें सुबेषा ॥ ४ ॥

"Greed is their covering and greed their bedding (they wallow in greed); they are ever given up to sexual enjoyment and gluttony and have no fear of punishment in the abode of Yama (the god of death). If they ever hear anyone exalted, they heave a deep sigh as though they had an attack of ague. On the other hand, when they find anyone in distress, they rejoice as though they had attained the sovereignty of the whole world. Devoted to their own selfish interests, they antagonize their kinsfolk, are given up to sensuality and greed and are most irascible. They recognize neither mother nor father nor preceptor nor the Brahmans; utterly ruined themselves, they bring ruin upon others. Overcome by infatuation they bear malice to others and have no love for communion with saints nor for the stories relating to Śrī Hari. Oceans of vice, dull-witted and lascivious, they revile the Vedas and usurp others' wealth. Though bearing malice to all, they are enemies of the Brahmans in particular; and full of hypocrisy and deceit at heart, they outwardly wear a saintly appearance. (1—4)

दो०—ऐसे अधम मनुज खल कृतजुग त्रेताँ नाहिं ।
द्वापर कछुक बृंद बहु होइहहिं कलिजुग माहिं ॥ ४० ॥

"Such vile and wicked men are absent in the Satya and Tretā Yugas; a sprinkling of them will appear in Dwāpara, while multitudes of them will crop forth in the Kali age. (40)

चौ०—पर हित सरिस धर्म नहिं भाई। पर पीड़ा सम नहिं अधमाई॥
निर्नय सकल पुरान बेद कर। कहेउँ तात जानहिं कोबिद नर॥ १॥
नर सरीर धरि जे पर पीरा। करहिं ते सहहिं महा भव भीरा॥
करहिं मोह बस नर अघ नाना। स्वारथ रत परलोक नसाना॥ २॥
कालरूप तिन्ह कहँ मैं भ्राता। सुभ अरु असुभ कर्म फल दाता॥
अस बिचारि जे परम सयाने। भजहिं मोहि संसृत दुख जाने॥ ३॥
त्यागहिं कर्म सुभासुभ दायक। भजहिं मोहि सुर नर मुनि नायक॥
संत असंतन्ह के गुन भाषे। ते न परहिं भव जिन्ह लखि राखे॥ ४॥

"Brother, there is no virtue like benevolence, and no meanness like oppressing others. I have declared to you, dear brother, the verdict of all the Vedas and Purāṇas; the wise also know it. They who inflict pain on others even after attaining the human body have to suffer the terrible pangs of birth and death. Dominated by infatuation and devoted to their selfish interest men commit various sins and thereby ruin their prospects in the next world. Figuring as Yama (the god of death) for their sake, brother, I dispense the fruit of their good and evil actions. Realizing this, those who are supremely clever adore Me, knowing the cycle of births and deaths as full of pain. They renounce actions which yield good or evil results and take refuge in Me, the lord of gods, men and sages. Thus I have told you the characteristics of saints and vile men. They who have fully comprehended them are no more subjected to the process of transmigration. (1—4)

दो०—सुनहु तात माया कृत गुन अरु दोष अनेक।
गुन यह उभय न देखिअहिं देखिअ सो अबिबेक॥ ४१॥

"Listen, dear brother: the numerous merits and demerits are all products of Māyā. The greatest merit is that they should cease to exist in one's eye; to discern them is ignorance." (41)

चौ०—श्रीमुख बचन सुनत सब भाई। हरषे प्रेम न हृदयँ समाई॥
करहिं बिनय अति बारहिं बारा। हनूमान हियँ हरष अपारा॥ १॥
पुनि रघुपति निज मंदिर गए। एहि बिधि चरित करत नित नए॥
बार बार नारद मुनि आवहिं। चरित पुनीत राम के गावहिं॥ २॥
नित नव चरित देखि मुनि जाहीं। ब्रह्मलोक सब कथा कहाहीं॥
सुनि बिरंचि अतिसय सुख मानहिं। पुनि पुनि तात करहु गुन गानहिं॥ ३॥
सनकादिक नारदहि सराहहिं। जद्यपि ब्रह्म निरत मुनि आहहिं॥
सुनि गुन गान समाधि बिसारी। सादर सुनहिं परम अधिकारी॥ ४॥

All the three brothers (Bharata, Laksmana and Satrughna) rejoiced to hear these words from the blessed lips of the Lord and their heart overflowed with love. Again and again they showed Him profound reverence; there was immense joy in the heart of Hanuman in particular. The Lord of the Raghus then retired to His own palace. In this way He enacted some new sport every day. The sage Nārada paid frequent visits and sang SrI Rama's holy exploits. After witnessing fresh deeds every day, the sage returned to Brahma's abode and recited the whole story there. Viranchi (the Creator) felt overjoyed to hear it and said, "Dear son, hymn His praises again and again". Sanaka and his three brothers extolled Narada: and, though absorbed in Brahma (the Infinite), the sages forgot their Samadhi (absorption) on hearing the hymn of praise to the Lord and listened to it with reverence, supremely qualified as they were. (1—4)

दो०—जीवनमुक्त ब्रह्मपर चरित सुनहिं तजि ध्यान ।
जे हरि कथाँ न करहिं रति तिन्ह के हिय पाषान ॥ ४२ ॥

Even those (like Sanaka and others) who are liberated though embodied and are absorbed in Brahma hear the narrative of SrI Rama even by interrupting their meditation (abstraction). Truly theirs must be a heart of stone, who take no delight in the stories of SrI Hari. (42)

चौ०—एक बार रघुनाथ बोलाए । गुर द्विज पुरबासी सब आए ॥
बैठे गुर मुनि अरु द्विज सज्जन । बोले बचन भगत भव भंजन ॥ १ ॥
सुनहु सकल पुरजन मम बानी । कहउँ न कछु ममता उर आनी ॥
नहिं अनीति नहिं कछु प्रभुताई । सुनहु करहु जो तुम्हहि सोहाई ॥ २ ॥
सोइ सेवक प्रियतम मम सोई । मम अनुसासन मानै जोई ॥
जौं अनीति कछु भाषौं भाई । तौ मोहि बरजहु भय बिसराई ॥ ३ ॥
बड़ें भाग मानुष तनु पावा । सुर दुर्लभ सब ग्रंथन्हि गावा ॥
साधन धाम मोच्छ कर द्वारा । पाइ न जेहिं परलोक सँवारा ॥ ४ ॥

One day, invited by the Lord of the Raghus, the preceptor (Vasistha) and other leading Brahmans and all the other citizens assembled (in the royal court). When the preceptor and the other sages and Brahmans as well as all other gentlemen had taken their seats, the Lord who puts an end to the round of births of His devotees addressed them in the following words:—"Listen to My words, citizens all: I am not going to say anything out of attachment for you in My heart; I do not ask you to do anything wrong nor do I make use of My authority. Therefore, listen to Me and act accordingly if you please. He is My servant and he is dearest to Me, who obeys My command. If I say anything which is wrong, brethren, be not afraid to correct Me. It is by great good fortune that you have secured a human body, which—as declared by all the scriptures—is difficult even for the gods to attain. It is a tabernacle suitable for spiritual endeavours, a gateway to liberation. He who fails to earn a good destiny hereafter even on attaining it, (1—4)

दो०—सो परत्र दुख पावइ सिर धुनि धुनि पछिताइ।
कालहि कर्महि ईस्वरहि मिथ्या दोस लगाइ॥ ४३॥

"He reaps torture in the other world and beats his head in remorse, wrongly attributing the blame to Time, Fate and God. (43)

चौ०—एहि तन कर फल बिषय न भाई। स्वर्गउ स्वल्प अंत दुखदाई॥
नर तनु पाइ बिषयँ मन देहीं। पलटि सुधा ते सठ बिष लेहीं॥ १॥
ताहि कबहुँ भल कहइ न कोई। गुंजा ग्रहइ परस मनि खोई॥
आकर चारि लच्छ चौरासी। जोनि भ्रमत यह जिव अबिनासी॥ २॥
फिरत सदा माया कर प्रेरा। काल कर्म सुभाव गुन घेरा॥
कबहुँक करि करुना नर देही। देत ईस बिनु हेतु सनेही॥ ३॥
नर तनु भव बारिधि कहुँ बेरो। सन्मुख मरुत अनुग्रह मेरो॥
करनधार सदगुर दृढ़ नावा। दुर्लभ साज सुलभ करि पावा॥ ४॥

"Sensuous enjoyment, brethren, is not the be-all and end-all of human existence; even heavenly enjoyment is short-lived and ends in sorrow. The fools who devote their mind to the pleasures of sense even after attaining human birth take poison in exchange for nectar. None will ever speak well of him who picks up a peppercorn throwing away the philosopher's stone. This immortal soul goes round through eighty-four lakh species of life, falling under four broad divisions. Driven by Maya (My deluding potency) and encompassed by Time, destiny, Nature and phenomenal existence, it ever drifts along. Rarely does God, who loves the Jiva without any self-interest, graciously bestow on it a human form, which is a veritable raft whereby it can cross the ocean of mundane existence, with My grace for a favourable wind and a worthy preceptor for a helmsman to steer this strong bark—a combination which, though difficult to secure, has been made easily available to it. (1—4)

दो०—जो न तरै भव सागर नर समाज अस पाइ।
सो कृत निंदक मंदमति आत्माहन गति जाइ॥ ४४॥

"The man who, though equipped with all these resources, fails to cross the ocean of metempsychosis is ungrateful and dull-witted and meets the fate of a self-murderer. (44)

चौ०—जौं परलोक इहाँ सुख चहहू। सुनि मम बचन हृदयँ दृढ़ गहहू॥
सुलभ सुखद मारग यह भाई। भगति मोरि पुरान श्रुति गाई॥ १॥
ग्यान अगम प्रत्यूह अनेका। साधन कठिन न मन कहुँ टेका॥
करत कष्ट बहु पावइ कोऊ। भक्ति हीन मोहि प्रिय नहिं सोऊ॥ २॥
भक्ति सुतंत्र सकल सुख खानी। बिनु सतसंग न पावहिं प्रानी॥
पुन्य पुंज बिनु मिलहिं न संता। सतसंगति संसृति कर अंता॥ ३॥
पुन्य एक जग महुँ नहिं दूजा। मन क्रम बचन बिप्र पद पूजा॥
सानुकूल तेहि पर मुनि देवा। जो तजि कपटु करइ द्विज सेवा॥ ४॥

"If you seek happiness here as well as hereafter, listen to My words and imprint them deeply in your heart. It is an easy and pleasant road, brethren, that of Devotion to My feet, extolled in the Purāṇas and Vedas. Gnosis is difficult to attain and beset with numerous obstacles. The path is rugged and there is no solid ground for the mind to rest on. Scarcely one attains it after a hard struggle; yet, lacking in Devotion, the man fails to win My love. Devotion is independent and a mine of all blessings; men, however, cannot attain it except through the fellowship of saints. Saints for their part are inaccessible without a stock of merit; communion with the Lord's devotees in any case brings to an end the cycle of births and deaths. There is only one meritorious act in this world and no other—to adore the feet of the Brahmans by thought, word and deed. The sages and gods are propitious to him who guilelessly serves the twice-born (the Brahmans). (1—4)

दो०—औरउ एक गुपुत मत सबहि कहउँ कर जोरि ।
संकर भजन बिना नर भगति न पावइ मोरि ॥ ४५ ॥

"With joined palms I lay before you all another secret doctrine: without adoring Śankara (Lord Śiva) man cannot attain devotion to Me. (45)

चौ०—कहहु भगति पथ कवन प्रयासा । जोग न मख जप तप उपबासा ॥
सरल सुभाव न मन कुटिलाई । जथा लाभ संतोष सदाई ॥ १ ॥
मोर दास कहाइ नर आसा । करइ तौ कहहु कहा बिस्वासा ॥
बहुत कहउँ का कथा बढ़ाई । एहि आचरन बस्य मैं भाई ॥ २ ॥
बैर न बिग्रह आस न त्रासा । सुखमय ताहि सदा सब आसा ॥
अनारंभ अनिकेत अमानी । अनघ अरोष दच्छ बिग्यानी ॥ ३ ॥
प्रीति सदा सज्जन संसर्गा । तृन सम बिषय स्वर्ग अपबर्गा ॥
भगति पच्छ हठ नहिं सठताई । दुष्ट तर्क सब दूरि बहाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Tell Me what pains are involved in treading the path of Devotion: it requires neither Yoga (mind-control), nor sacrifices, nor Japa (muttering of prayers), nor penance, nor fasting. A guileless disposition, a mind free from perversity and absolute contentment with whatever may be got—this is all that is needed. If he who is called a devotee yet counts upon man, tell me, what faith does he have in Me? What use My dwelling on the subject further: I am won by the conduct of a man as depicted below, brethren. He who has no enmity or quarrel with anyone and is devoid of hope and fear,—to such a man all the quarters are ever full of joy. Undertaking nothing (with an interested motive), without home, without pride and without sin, free from wrath, clever and wise, ever loving the company of saints and accounting the enjoyments even of heaven as well as final beatitude as no more than a blade of grass, tenaciously adhering to the cult of Devotion but avoiding bigotry, and giving up all sophistical reasoning— (1—4)

दो०—मम गुन ग्राम नाम रत गत ममता मद मोह ।
ता कर सुख सोइ जानइ परानंद संदोह ॥ ४६ ॥

"Fond of singing and hearing My praises and devoted to My Name, and free from attachment to the world, arrogance and infatuation—the felicity that such a man enjoys is known to him alone who has become one with God, the embodiment of supreme bliss." (46)

चौ०—सुनत सुधासम बचन राम के। गहे सबनि पद कृपाधाम के॥
जननि जनक गुर बंधु हमारे। कृपा निधान प्रान ते प्यारे॥ १॥
तनु धनु धाम राम हितकारी। सब बिधि तुम्ह प्रनतारति हारी॥
असि सिख तुम्ह बिनु देइ न कोऊ। मातु पिता स्वारथ रत ओऊ॥ २॥
हेतु रहित जग जुग उपकारी। तुम्ह तुम्हार सेवक असुरारी॥
स्वारथ मीत सकल जग माहीं। सपनेहुँ प्रभु परमारथ नाहीं॥ ३॥
सब के बचन प्रेम रस साने। सुनि रघुनाथ हृदयँ हरषाने॥
निज निज गृह गए आयसु पाई। बरनत प्रभु बतकही सुहाई॥ ४॥

On hearing Śrī Rāma's nectar-like words all who (had assembled there) clasped the feet of the All-merciful. "Fountain of mercy! You are our father and mother, preceptor and kinsman; You are dearer to us than our own life. Rāma, You are our body, wealth and habitat and You are beneficent to us in every way, relieving as You do the agony of the suppliant. None other than You could give such instruction; for even father and mother are devoted to their own interest. You two are the only disinterested benefactors in this world—Yourself and Your servant, O Destroyer of the demons. Everyone else in this world has his own interest to serve; no one thinks of others' highest (spiritual) interests even in a dream, O Lord." The Lord of the Raghus was delighted at heart to hear the words of all, steeped as they were in the nectar of love. On receiving the Lord's permission they returned each to his own residence, repeating on the way the Lord's charming discourse. (1—4)

दो०—उमा अवधबासी नर नारि कृतारथ रूप।
ब्रह्म सच्चिदानंद घन रघुनायक जहँ भूप॥ ४७॥

Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) the people of Ayodhyā, both men and women, were the very picture of blessedness; for the Lord of the Raghus, who was none other than Brahma, the embodiment of truth, intelligence and bliss, ruled there as king (47)

चौ०—एक बार बसिष्ट मुनि आए। जहाँ राम सुखधाम सुहाए॥
अति आदर रघुनायक कीन्हा। पद पखारि पादोदक लीन्हा॥ १॥
राम सुनहु मुनि कह कर जोरी। कृपासिंधु बिनती कछु मोरी॥
देखि देखि आचरन तुम्हारा। होत मोह मम हृदयँ अपारा॥ २॥
महिमा अमिति बेद नहिं जाना। मैं केहि भाँति कहउँ भगवाना॥
उपरोहित्य कर्म अति मंदा। बेद पुरान सुमृति कर निंदा॥ ३॥
जब न लेउँ मैं तब बिधि मोही। कहा लाभ आगें सुत तोही॥
परमातमा ब्रह्म नर रूपा। होइहि रघुकुल भूषन भूपा॥ ४॥

One day the sage Vasiṣṭha called at the palace where the charming and all-blissful Śrī Rāma was. The Lord of the Raghus received him with great reverence, laved his feet and sipped the water into which they had been washed. "Listen, Rāma:" said the sage with joined palms, "I make my humble submission, O Ocean of mercy. Even as I watch Your doings infinite bewilderment possesses my soul. Your immeasurable greatness is beyond the knowledge of the Vedas; how can I describe it, O Almighty Lord ? The vocation of a familypriest is very low: the Vedas, Purāṇas and the Smṛti texts equally denounce it. When I would not accept it, Brahmā (my father) said to me, 'It will redound to your benefit hereafter, my son: Brahma Itself, the Supreme Spirit, will appear in human semblance as a king, the ornament of Raghu's race.' (1—4)

दो०—तब मैं हृदयँ बिचारा जोग जग्य ब्रत दान ।
जा कहुँ करिअ सो पैहउँ धर्म न एहि सम आन ॥ ४८ ॥

"Then I thought to myself, (through this very office) I shall attain to Him who is the object of Yogic practices, performance of sacrifices, religious vows and charity. Thus there can be no other vocation like this. (48)

चौ०—जप तप नियम जोग निज धर्मा । श्रुति संभव नाना सुभ कर्मा ॥
ग्यान दया दम तीरथ मज्जन । जहँ लगि धर्म कहत श्रुति सज्जन ॥ १ ॥
आगम निगम पुरान अनेका । पढ़े सुने कर फल प्रभु एका ॥
तव पद पंकज प्रीति निरंतर । सब साधन कर यह फल सुंदर ॥ २ ॥
छूटइ मल कि मलहि के धोएँ । घृत कि पाव कोइ बारि बिलोएँ ॥
प्रेम भगति जल बिनु रघुराई । अभिअंतर मल कबहुँ न जाई ॥ ३ ॥
सोइ सर्बग्य तग्य सोइ पंडित । सोइ गुन गृह बिग्यान अखंडित ॥
दच्छ संकल लच्छन जुत सोई । जाकें पद सरोज रति होई ॥ ४ ॥

"Japa (muttering of prayers), austere penance, religious observances, Yogic practices, the performance of one's allotted duties, the various pious acts recommended by the Vedas, the cultivation of spiritual enlightenment, compassion, self-control, bathing in sacred waters and whatever other sacred practices have been advocated by the Vedas and holy men and the recitation and hearing of various Tantra texts, Vedas and Purāṇas have only one reward, my lord; nay, all spiritual endeavours lead to the same glorious end, viz., unceasing devotion to Your lotus feet. Can dirt be removed by cleansing with dirt ? Can anyone obtain butter by churning water ? Even so, except by cleansing with the water of loving devotion, O Lord of the Raghus, the impurity accumulated within can never be washed away. He alone is all-wise, he the knower of Truth and he alone learned; he alone is an abode of virtues and possessed of uninterrupted and immediate perception; nay, he is clever and endowed with all auspicious attributes, who is devoted to Your lotus feet. (1—4)

दो०—नाथ एक बर मागउँ राम कृपा करि देहु ।
जन्म जन्म प्रभु पद कमल कबहुँ घटै जनि नेहु ॥ ४९ ॥

"My lord, I would ask one boon; grant it in Your mercy, Rāma. May my love for Your lotus feet, O Lord, never flag in the course of my future births." (49)

चौ०—अस कहि मुनि बसिष्ट गृह आए। कृपासिंधु के मन अति भाए॥
हनूमान भरतादिक भ्राता। संग लिए सेवक सुखदाता॥१॥
पुनि कृपाल पुर बाहेर गए। गज रथ तुरग मगावत भए॥
देखि कृपा करि सकल सराहे। दिए उचित जिन्ह जिन्ह तेइ चाहे॥२॥
हरन सकल श्रम प्रभु श्रम पाई। गए जहाँ सीतल अवँराई॥
भरत दीन्ह निज बसन डसाई। बैठे प्रभु सेवहिं सब भाई॥३॥
मारुतसुत तब मारुत करई। पुलक बपुष लोचन जल भरई॥
हनूमान सम नहिं बड़भागी। नहिं कोउ राम चरन अनुरागी॥४॥
गिरिजा जासु प्रीति सेवकाई। बार बार प्रभु निज मुख गाई॥५॥

So saying, the sage Vasiṣṭha returned home. The All-merciful was highly pleased with him in His heart of hearts. Śrī Rāma, the delight of His servants, took with Him Hanumān as well as Bharata and His other two brothers (Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna) and the benign Lord then went outside the city and ordered elephants, chariots and horses to be immediately brought before Him. Regarding them with kindness He praised them all and distributed them among the people giving each what one deserved and what one wished to have. The Lord, who is the reliever of all fatigue, Himself felt tired and retired to a cool mango grove, where Bharata spread his own scarf and the Lord took His seat thereon with all His brothers in attendance. The son of the wind-god now began to fan Him; he felt a thrill of joy all over his body and his eyes filled with tears. (Says Śiva,) There is no one so blessed nor anyone so devoted to Śrī Rāma's lotus feet as Hanumān, whose love and service, O daughter of the mountain-king have been repeatedly extolled by the Lord with His own mouth. (1—5)

दो०—तेहिं अवसर मुनि नारद आए करतल बीन।
गावन लगे राम कल कीरति सदा नबीन॥५०॥

At that time came Nārada, lute in hand, and began to sing Śrī Rāma's sweet renown, which always has a fresh charm about it. (50)

चौ०—मामवलोकय पंकज लोचन। कृपा बिलोकनि सोच बिमोचन॥
नील तामरस स्याम काम अरि। हृदय कंज मकरंद मधुप हरि॥१॥
जातुधान बरूथ बल भंजन। मुनि सज्जन रंजन अघ गंजन॥
भूसुर ससि नव बृंद बलाहक। असरन सरन दीन जन गाहक॥२॥
भुज बल बिपुल भार महि खंडित। खर दूषन बिराध बध पंडित॥
रावनारि सुखरूप भूपबर। जय दसरथ कुल कुमुद सुधाकर॥३॥
सुजस पुरान बिदित निगमागम। गावत सुर मुनि संत समागम॥
कारुनीक ब्यलीक मद खंडन। सब बिधि कुसल कोसला मंडन॥४॥
कलि मल मथन नाम ममताहन। तुलसिदास प्रभु पाहि प्रनत जन॥५॥

"Regard me, O lotus-eyed Lord, O Reliever of anxiety, with a benignant look. Dark of hue as the blue lotus, O Hari, You are as it were a bee enjoying the honey of the lotus heart of Lord Śiva (the Destroyer of Cupid). Shattering the might of the demon hosts, You bring delight to saints and sages and wipe out sins. Beneficent to the Brahmans as a mass of fresh clouds to a thirsty crop, You are the refuge of the helpless and the befriender of the afflicted. By the might of Your arm You have crushed Earth's enormous burden and ingeniously killed the demons Khara, Dūṣaṇa and Virādha. Hail, all-blissful Slayer of Rāvaṇa, noblest of kings, a moon to the lily-like line of King Daśaratha. Your fair renown is familiar to the Purāṇas, Vedas and Tantras and is sung in the congregations of gods, sages and saints. Crushing false pride in Your mercy You are clever in every way, O Jewel of the city of Ayodhyā. Your very name wipes out the impurities of the Kali age and destroys worldly attachment. Pray, protect the suppliant, O lord of Tulasīdāsa."

(1—5)

दो०—प्रेम सहित मुनि नारद बरनि राम गुन ग्राम ।
सोभासिंधु हृदयँ धरि गए जहाँ बिधि धाम ॥ ५१ ॥

Having lovingly recounted Śrī Rāma's catalogue of virtues, the sage Nārada returned to Brahmā's abode, enshrining the Ocean of beauty in his heart. (51)

चौ०—गिरिजा सुनहु बिसद यह कथा । मैं सब कही मोरि मति जथा ॥
राम चरित सत कोटि अपारा । श्रुति सारदा न बरनै पारा ॥ १ ॥
राम अनंत अनंत गुनानी । जन्म कर्म अनंत नामानी ॥
जल सीकर महि रज गनि जाहीं । रघुपति चरित न बरनि सिराहीं ॥ २ ॥
बिमल कथा हरि पद दायनी । भगति होइ सुनि अनपायनी ॥
उमा कहिउँ सब कथा सुहाई । जो भुसुंडि खगपतिहि सुनाई ॥ ३ ॥
कछुक राम गुन कहेउँ बखानी । अब का कहौं सो कहहु भवानी ॥
सुनि सुभ कथा उमा हरषानी । बोली अति बिनीत मृदु बानी ॥ ४ ॥
धन्य धन्य मैं धन्य पुरारी । सुनेउँ राम गुन भव भय हारी ॥ ५ ॥

Listen, Girijā: (continues Lord Śankara,) "I have told you in full this holy narrative according to My own lights. The stories of Śrī Rāma are without number and beyond all dimensions. Not even the Vedas and Śāradā (the goddess of speech) could recount them all. Infinite is Rāma and infinite His excellences; His births, exploits and names too are endless. It may be possible to count the drops of water (in a shower of rain) or the grains of sand; but the exploits of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) cannot be recounted in full. This sacred story enables one to reach the abode of Śrī Hari; whoever hears it is blessed with unceasing devotion. Umā, (goes on Lord Śiva,) I have repeated in full the delightful story which Bhuśuṇḍi recited to the king of the birds. I have thus recounted a few of Śrī Rāma's virtues; let me know, Bhavānī (Pārvatī), what am I to tell you next." Umā was glad to have heard the blessed story and replied in exceedingly polite and soft accents: "I am thrice blessed, O Slayer of the demon Tripura, to have heard Śrī Rāma's praises, that take away the fear of birth and death. (1—5)

दो०—तुम्हरी कृपाँ कृपायतन अब कृतकृत्य न मोह।
जानेउँ राम प्रताप प्रभु चिदानंद संदोह ॥ ५२ (क) ॥
नाथ तवानन ससि स्रवत कथा सुधा रघुबीर।
श्रवन पुटन्हि मन पान करि नहिं अघात मतिधीर ॥ ५२ (ख) ॥

"By Your grace, O Abode of mercy, I have now attained the object of my life and have no delusion left in me. I have realized the greatness of Lord Śrī Rāma, who is knowledge and bliss personified. O lord of resolute mind, my soul knows no satiety as I quaff with the cups of my ears the nectar-like story of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) flowing from Your moon-like mouth. (52 A-B)

चौ०—राम चरित जे सुनत अघाहीं। रस बिसेष जाना तिन्ह नाहीं ॥
जीवनमुक्त महामुनि जेऊ। हरि गुन सुनहिं निरंतर तेऊ ॥ १ ॥
भव सागर चह पार जो पावा। राम कथा ता कहँ दृढ़ नावा ॥
बिषइन्ह कहँ पुनि हरि गुन ग्रामा। श्रवन सुखद अरु मन अभिरामा ॥ २ ॥
श्रवनवंत अस को जग माहीं। जाहि न रघुपति चरित सोहाहीं ॥
ते जड़ जीव निजात्मक घाती। जिन्हहि न रघुपति कथा सोहाती ॥ ३ ॥
हरिचरित्र मानस तुम्ह गावा। सुनि मैं नाथ अमिति सुख पावा ॥
तुम्ह जो कही यह कथा सुहाई। कागभसुंडि गरुड़ प्रति गाई ॥ ४ ॥

"They who feel satiated with hearing the exploits of Śrī Rāma have little known their peculiar sapor. Even those great sages who have attained final beatitude in their very lifetime constantly hear the praises of Śrī Hari. To him who seeks to cross the ocean of worldly existence, the narrative of Śrī Rāma serves as a secure bark. Nay, the praises of Śrī Hari are delightful to the ear and pleasing to the mind even of the sensualist. Is there in this world anyone with ears to hear, whom the exploits of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) do not delight. Stupid are those creatures and indeed killers of their soul, whom the narrative of Śrī Rāma does not attract. While You sang what You have chosen to call "the Mānasa Lake of Śrī Hari's Exploits", I listened, my lord, with boundless joy. You have just told me that this charming story was recited by Kākabhuśuṇḍi to Garuḍa. (1–4)

दो०—बिरति ग्यान बिग्यान दृढ़ राम चरन अति नेह।
बायस तन रघुपति भगति मोहि परम संदेह ॥ ५३ ॥

"Bhuśuṇḍi is staunch in his dispassion and steadfast in his wisdom and realization, and cherishes deep devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet. That one possessing the form of a crow should be a devotee of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) fills me with great doubt. (53)

चौ०—नर सहस्र महँ सुनहु पुरारी। कोउ एक होइ धर्म ब्रतधारी ॥
धर्मसील कोटिक महँ कोई। बिषय बिमुख बिराग रत होई ॥ १ ॥

कोटि बिरक्त मध्य श्रुति कहई । सम्यक ग्यान सकृत कोउ लहई ॥
ग्यानवंत कोटिक महँ कोऊ । जीवनमुक्त सकृत जग सोऊ ॥ २ ॥
तिन्ह सहस्र महुँ सब सुख खानी । दुर्लभ ब्रह्म लीन बिग्यानी ॥
धर्मसील बिरक्त अरु ग्यानी । जीवनमुक्त ब्रह्मपर प्रानी ॥ ३ ॥
सब ते सो दुर्लभ सुरराया । राम भगति रत गत मद माया ॥
सो हरिभगति काग किमि पाई । बिस्वनाथ मोहि कहहु बुझाई ॥ ४ ॥

"Listen, O Slayer of demon Tripura: among a thousand men there is scarce one who is steadfast in his vow of piety. Among ten million souls devoted to religion there may be one who is averse to the pleasures of sense and takes delight in dispassion. Among ten million souls free from worldly attachment, so declare the Vedas, scarce one succeeds in acquiring perfect wisdom. Among ten million enlightened souls in this world there is hardly one who attains final beatitude even when living. Among a thousand such souls he who has not only realized his oneness with Brahma but merged his identity in the Absolute and has accordingly become a fountain of all joy is rarely to be found. Of the religious, the unattached, the enlightened and the emancipated, as well as of those merged in the Absolute, O lord of divinities, he who takes delight in devotion to Śrī Rāma and is free from vanity and wiles is most difficult to find. Kindly explain to me at length, O Lord of the universe, how such a devotion to Śrī Hari was attained by a crow. (1—4)

दो०—राम परायन ग्यान रत गुनागार मति धीर ।
नाथ कहहु केहि कारन पायउ काक सरीर ॥ ५४ ॥

"Also tell me, my lord, how did Bhuśuṇḍi obtain the form of a crow even though devoted to Śrī Rāma, steeped in wisdom, a home of virtues and resolute of mind? (54)

चौ०—यह प्रभु चरित पवित्र सुहावा । कहहु कृपाल काग कहँ पावा ॥
तुम्ह केहि भाँति सुना मदनारी । कहहु मोहि अति कौतुक भारी ॥ १ ॥
गरुड़ महाग्यानी गुन रासी । हरि सेवक अति निकट निवासी ॥
तेहिं केहि हेतु काग सन जाई । सुनी कथा मुनि निकर बिहाई ॥ २ ॥
कहहु कवन बिधि भा संबादा । दोउ हरिभगत काग उरगादा ॥
गौरि गिरा सुनि सरल सुहाई । बोले सिव सादर सुख पाई ॥ ३ ॥
धन्य सती पावन मति तोरी । रघुपति चरन प्रीति नहिं थोरी ॥
सुनहु परम पुनीत इतिहासा । जो सुनि सकल लोक भ्रम नासा ॥ ४ ॥
उपजइ राम चरन बिस्वासा । भव निधि तर नर बिनहिं प्रयासा ॥ ५ ॥

"Further tell me, O merciful lord, wherefrom did the crow get this sacred and delightful story? And also let me know how could You hear it, O Destroyer of Cupid: for all this fills me with much inquisitiveness. Garuḍa, again, is highly enlightened and an embodiment of virtues; moreover, he is a servant of Śrī Hari (being His own mount) and lives very close to Him.

Leaving a host of sages, wherefore did he approach a crow and hear Śrī Rāma's story from him? Further let me know how the dialogue proceeded between the crow and Garuḍa (the devourer of serpents), both of whom are devotees of Śrī Hari." Lord Śiva rejoiced to hear the artless and welcome speech of His Consort (Gaurī) and politely replied, "You are blessed indeed, O virtuous lady; your idea is holy, and you possess not a little love for the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). Therefore, listen to a most sacred story, which, when heard, puts an end to the delusion of the whole universe, engenders faith in Śrī Rāma's feet and enables a man to cross the ocean of worldly existence without any difficulty. (1—5)

दो०—ऐसिअ प्रस्न बिहंगपति कीन्हि काग सन जाइ।
सो सब सादर कहिहउँ सुनहु उमा मन लाइ॥ ५५॥

The king of the birds too went and put quite similar questions to the crow. I will reverently tell you all that: listen, Umā, with an attentive mind. (55)

चौ०—मैं जिमि कथा सुनी भव मोचनि। सो प्रसंग सुनु सुमुखि सुलोचनि॥
प्रथम दच्छ गृह तव अवतारा। सती नाम तब रहा तुम्हारा॥ १॥
दच्छ जग्य तव भा अपमाना। तुम्ह अति क्रोध तजे तब प्राना॥
मम अनुचरन्ह कीन्ह मख भंगा। जानहु तुम्ह सो सकल प्रसंगा॥ २॥
तब अति सोच भयउ मन मोरें। दुखी भयउँ बियोग प्रिय तोरें॥
सुंदर बन गिरि सरित तड़ागा। कौतुक देखत फिरउँ बेरागा॥ ३॥
गिरि सुमेर उत्तर दिसि दूरी। नील सैल एक सुंदर भूरी॥
तासु कनकमय सिखर सुहाए। चारि चारु मोरे मन भाए॥ ४॥
तिन्ह पर एक एक बिटप बिसाला। बट पीपर पाकरी रसाला॥
सैलोपरि सर सुंदर सोहा। मनि सोपान देखि मन मोहा॥ ५॥

Listen, O charming and bright-eyed lady, to the circumstances in which I heard this story, that delivers one from the cycle of births and deaths. You first took birth in the house of Dakṣa and Satī was the name you then bore. At Dakṣa's sacrifice you were subjected to contumely and in the heat of your indignation you gave up your life then. My servants wrecked the sacrifice: you know the whole episode already. I felt much troubled at heart thereafter; for your loss had left me disconsolate, my dear. I wandered among beautiful woodlands, mountains, rivers and tanks seeing sights, but found no charm anywhere. In the far north, even beyond Mount Sumeru, there stands a most lovely mountain, known by the name of Nīlagiri (the Blue Mountain). It has four charming and delightful gold peaks, which gladdened my soul: on each stood one gigantic tree, a banyan, a Peepul (the sacred bo-tree), a Plakṣa (the Indian fig tree) and a mango. On the top of the mountain sparkled a beautiful tarn with jewelled steps, which were so enchanting to behold. (1—5)

दो०—सीतल अमल मधुर जल जलज बिपुल बहुरंग।
कूजत कल रव हंस गन गुंजत मंजुल भृंग॥ ५६॥

Its water was cool, limpid and sweet; its lotuses abundant and many coloured. Flocks of swans murmured their sweet notes and the bees made a delightful buzzing. (56)

चौ०—तेहिं गिरि रुचिर बसइ खग सोई। तासु नास कल्पांत न होई॥
माया कृत गुन दोष अनेका। मोह मनोज आदि अबिबेका॥ १॥
रहे ब्यापि समस्त जग माहीं। तेहि गिरि निकट कबहुँ नहिं जाहीं॥
तहँ बसि हरिहि भजइ जिमि कागा। सो सुनु उमा सहित अनुरागा॥ २॥
पीपर तरु तर ध्यान सो धरई। जाप जग्य पाकरि तर करई॥
आँब छाँह कर मानस पूजा। तजि हरि भजनु काजु नहिं दूजा॥ ३॥
बर तर कह हरि कथा प्रसंगा। आवहिं सुनहिं अनेक बिहंगा॥
राम चरित बिचित्र बिधि नाना। प्रेम सहित कर सादर गाना॥ ४॥
सुनहिं सकल मति बिमल मराला। बसहिं निरंतर जे तेहिं ताला॥
जब मैं जाइ सो कौतुक देखा। उर उपजा आनंद बिसेषा॥ ५॥

On that splendid mountain dwells the same bird (Kākabhuśuṇḍi), that outlives even the end of the world. The various good and evil phenomena created by Māyā (the Cosmic Illusion), and ignorance in its varied forms such as infatuation, lust etc., which hold sway all over the universe, never touch the precincts of that mountain. Now hear, Umā, with tender affection how the crow spends his days there in adoring Śrī Hari. Under the Peepul tree he practises meditation; he performs sacrifice in the form of Japa (muttering of prayers) under the Plakṣa; in the shade of the mango tree he offers mental worship to the Lord, having no occupation other than adoring Śrī Hari; and under the banyan he narrates episodes from the story of Śrī Hari, to hear which many a bird flocks there. With loving reverence he sings the various marvellous exploits of Śrī Rāma: the swans of pure mind, that ever dwell in that lake, all listen to the story. When I arrived there and saw the spectacle, an intense joy welled up in my heart. (1—5)

दो०—तब कछु काल मराल तनु धरि तहँ कीन्ह निवास।
सादर सुनि रघुपति गुन पुनि आयउँ कैलास॥ ५७॥

Then, assuming the form of a swan, I sojourned there for some length of time. And, after reverently listening to the praises of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), I returned to Kailāsa. (57)

चौ०—गिरिजा कहेउँ सो सब इतिहासा। मैं जेहि समय गयउँ खग पासा॥
अब सो कथा सुनहु जेहि हेतू। गयउ काग पहिं खग कुल केतू॥ १॥
जब रघुनाथ कीन्हि रन क्रीड़ा। समुझत चरित होति मोहि ब्रीड़ा॥
इंद्रजीत कर आपु बँधायो। तब नारद मुनि गरुड़ पठायो॥ २॥
बंधन काटि गयो उरगादा। उपजा हृदयँ प्रचंड बिषादा॥
प्रभु बंधन समुझत बहु भाँती। करत बिचार उरग आराती॥ ३॥
ब्यापक ब्रह्म बिरज बागीसा। माया मोह पार परमीसा॥
सो अवतार सुनेउँ जग माहीं। देखेउँ सो प्रभाव कछु नाहीं॥ ४॥

Girijā, I have thus narrated the whole episode as to when I visited the bird (Kākabhuśuṇḍi). Now hear the circumstances under which Garuḍa (the glory of the feathered kingdom) called on the crow. When the Lord of the Raghus enacted the sport of a combat (with Meghanāda, Rāvaṇa's son)—the very thought of which fills me with shame—and allowed Himself to be bound by Meghanāda (the conqueror of Indra), the sage Nārada despatched Garuḍa. When Garuḍa (the devourer of serpents) had cut the bonds and departed, a terrible dejection possessed his soul. Recalling the Lord's bondage, the enemy of the serpents thought over the incident in many ways: "It was the all-pervading and passionless Brahma, the lord of speech, the supreme Ruler beyond Māyā and error, who had, I was told, taken descent in this world. But I saw none of His divine glory. (1—4)

दो०—भव बंधन ते छूटहिं नर जपि जा कर नाम।
खर्ब निसाचर बाँधेउ नागपास सोइ राम ॥ ५८ ॥

"The same Rāma, by repeating whose Name men get freedom from the bonds of worldly existence was tied down by a puny demon with coils of snakes!" (58)

चौ०—नाना भाँति मनहि समुझावा। प्रगट न ग्यान हृदयँ भ्रम छावा ॥
खेद खिन्न मन तर्क बढ़ाई। भयउ मोहबस तुम्हरिहिं नाईं ॥ १ ॥
ब्याकुल गयउ देवरिषि पाहीं। कहेसि जो संसय निज मन माहीं ॥
सुनि नारदहि लागि अति दाया। सुनु खग प्रबल राम कै माया ॥ २ ॥
जो ग्यानिन्ह कर चित अपहरई। बरिआईं बिमोह मन करई ॥
जेहिं बहु बार नचावा मोही। सोइ ब्यापी बिहंगपति तोही ॥ ३ ॥
महामोह उपजा उर तोरें। मिटिहि न बेगि कहें खग मोरें ॥
चतुरानन पहिं जाहु खगेसा। सोइ करेहु जेहि होइ निदेसा ॥ ४ ॥

Garuḍa did all he could to reassure himself; but the light of wisdom did not dawn on him; on the other hand, error overshadowed his soul all the more. Torn by torments and full of mental questionings, he fell a prey to delusion just like yourself. In his perplexity he approached the celestial sage (Nārada) and apprized him of the doubt that preyed upon his mind. On hearing his tale Nārada was moved with great compassion and said, "Listen, Garuḍa: formidable is Śrī Rāma's Māyā (delusive power); it robs even the wise of their sense and bringing them under its sway clouds their mind with utter infatuation. The same Māyā that befooled me many a time has laid its hold on you, O lord of the feathered creation. A blinding infatuation has taken root in your heart and it will not be readily eradicated by any words of mine. Therefore, betake yourself to Brahmā (the four-faced Creator), O lord of the winged creatures, and do whatever he enjoins you." (1—4)

दो०—अस कहि चले देवरिषि करत राम गुन गान।
हरि माया बल बरनत पुनि पुनि परम सुजान ॥ ५९ ॥

So saying the most enlightened celestial sage went his way, chanting Śrī Rāma's praises and repeatedly recalling to his mind the power of Śrī Hari's Māyā. (59)

चौ०—तब खगपति बिरंचि पहिं गयऊ । निज संदेह सुनावत भयऊ ॥
सुनि बिरंचि रामहि सिरु नावा । समुझि प्रताप प्रेम अति छावा ॥ १ ॥
मन महुँ करइ बिचार बिधाता । माया बस कबि कोबिद ग्याता ॥
हरि माया कर अमिति प्रभावा । बिपुल बार जेहिं मोहि नचावा ॥ २ ॥
अग जगमय जग मम उपराजा । नहिं आचरज मोह खगराजा ॥
तब बोले बिधि गिरा सुहाई । जान महेस राम प्रभुताई ॥ ३ ॥
बैनतेय संकर पहिं जाहू । तात अनत पूछहु जनि काहू ॥
तहँ होइहि तव संसय हानी । चलेउ बिहंग सुनत बिधि बानी ॥ ४ ॥

The lord of the feathered creation then went to the Creator and told him his doubt. On hearing his story Brahmā bowed his head to Śrī Rāma and, realizing His might, was overwhelmed with love. The Creator mused within himself: "The seers and sages as well as the learned are all dominated by Māyā. Unbounded is the power of Śrī Hari's Māyā, that has often made a puppet of me. The whole of this animate and inanimate creation was evolved by me; no wonder, then, that the king of the birds has been beguiled by it." Thereupon Brahmā said in charming accents, "The great Lord Śiva is conversant with Śrī Rāma's glory. Therefore, O son of Vinatā, approach Lord Śankara and ask no questions of anyone elsewhere, dear child. There alone will your doubts be resolved." On hearing the Creator's advice the bird flew away. (1—4)

दो०—परमातुर बिहंगपति आयउ तब मो पास ।
जात रहेउँ कुबेर गृह रहिहु उमा कैलास ॥ ६० ॥

Then came the lord of the feathered kingdom in utmost distress to me. At that time I was on my way to Kubera's residence; while you, Umā, were here on Mount Kailāsa. (60

चौ०—तेहिं मम पद सादर सिरु नावा । पुनि आपन संदेह सुनावा ॥
सुनि ता करि बिनती मृदु बानी । प्रेम सहित मैं कहेउँ भवानी ॥ १ ॥
मिलेहु गरुड़ मारग महँ मोही । कवन भाँति समुझावौं तोही ॥
तबहिं होइ सब संसय भंगा । जब बहु काल करिअ सतसंगा ॥ २ ॥
सुनिअ तहाँ हरि कथा सुहाई । नाना भाँति मुनिन्ह जो गाई ॥
जेहि महुँ आदि मध्य अवसाना । प्रभु प्रतिपाद्य राम भगवाना ॥ ३ ॥
नित हरि कथा होत जहँ भाई । पठवउँ तहाँ सुनहु तुम्ह जाई ॥
जाइहि सुनत सकल संदेहा । राम चरन होइहि अति नेहा ॥ ४ ॥

He reverently bowed his head at my feet and then placed his doubt before me. On hearing his submission, which was couched in polite terms, Bhavānī, I lovingly replied to him, "Garuḍa, you have met me on the way;

how then, shall I instruct you? Doubts are wholly resolved only when one enjoys the fellowship of saints for a long time, and listens there to the delightful story of Śrī Hari, that has been sung by the sages in diverse ways and the sole theme of which—at the beginning, in the middle as well as at the end—is the divine Lord Śrī Rāma. I shall accordingly send you to a place where, O brother, the story of Śrī Hari is recited every day; you go there and listen. As you hear it all your doubts will vanish and you will develop intense love for Śrī Rāma's feet. (1—4)

दो०—बिनु सतसंग न हरि कथा तेहि बिनु मोह न भाग ।
मोह गएँ बिनु राम पद होइ न दृढ़ अनुराग ॥ ६१ ॥

Except in the company of saints there is no talk of Śrī Hari, and one cannot be rid of error except through such talk. And till one's error is dispersed one cannot have deep-rooted affection for Śrī Rāma's feet. (61)

चौ०—मिलहिं न रघुपति बिनु अनुरागा । किएँ जोग तप ग्यान बिरागा ॥
उत्तर दिसि सुंदर गिरि नीला । तहँ रह काकभुसुंडि सुसीला ॥ १ ॥
राम भगति पथ परम प्रबीना । ग्यानी गुन गृह बहुकालीना ॥
राम कथा सो कहइ निरंतर । सादर सुनहिं बिबिध बिहंगबर ॥ २ ॥
जाइ सुनहु तहँ हरि गुन भूरी । होइहि मोह जनित दुख दूरी ॥
मैं जब तेहि सब कहा बुझाई । चलेउ हरषि मम पद सिरु नाई ॥ ३ ॥
ताते उमा न मैं समुझावा । रघुपति कृपाँ मरमु मैं पावा ॥
होइहि कीन्ह कबहुँ अभिमाना । सो खोवै चह कृपानिधाना ॥ ४ ॥
कछु तेहि ते पुनि मैं नहिं राखा । समुझइ खग खगही कै भाषा ॥
प्रभु माया बलवंत भवानी । जाहि न मोह कवन अस ग्यानी ॥ ५ ॥

The Lord of the Raghus cannot be found except through love, even though you may practise Yoga (mind-control) or austere penance or cultivate spiritual wisdom or dispassion. In the north there is a beautiful blue mountain called Nīlagiri, where lives the amiable Kākabhuśuṇḍi, highly conversant with the path of Devotion to Śrī Rāma, enlightened, full of all good qualities and ages old. He unceasingly recites Śrī Rāma's narrative and noble birds of different species reverently listen to it. Go there and hear of the many virtues of Śrī Hari; your distress born of infatuation will thus disappear." When I had thus told him everything in unambiguous terms, Garuḍa bowed his head at my feet and departed with joy. Umā, I did not instruct him myself, because by the grace of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) I had come to know the secret (of Garuḍa's infatuation). He must have given vent to his pride on some occasion and the All-merciful evidently wished to cure him of it. Partly there was another reason why I did not detain him: a bird can follow the language of a bird alone. My lord's Māyā, Bhavānī, is formidable; who is there so wise as not to be beguiled by it? (1—5)

दो०—ग्यानी भगत सिरोमनि त्रिभुवनपति कर जान ।
ताहि मोह माया नर पावँर करहिं गुमान ॥ ६२ (क) ॥

Even Garuḍa, the very crest-jewel of devotees and enlightened souls and the mount of Lord Viṣṇu (the sovereign of the three spheres), was deluded by Māyā; how absurd, then, that poor mortals vaunt their immunity from it. (62 A)

[PAUSE 28 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

सिव बिरंचि कहुँ मोहइ को है बपुरा आन ।
अस जियँ जानि भजहिं मुनि माया पति भगवान ॥ ६२ (ख) ॥

The Lord's Māyā beguiles even Śiva and Brahmā; of what account is any poor creature ? Bearing this in mind, the sages adore the divine Lord of Māyā. (62 B)

चौ०—गयउ गरुड़ जहँ बसइ भुसुंडा । मति अकुंठ हरि भगति अखंडा ॥
देखि सैल प्रसन्न मन भयऊ । माया मोह सोच सब गयऊ ॥ १ ॥
करि तड़ाग मज्जन जलपाना । बट तर गयउ हृदयँ हरषाना ॥
बृद्ध बृद्ध बिहंग तहँ आए । सुनै राम के चरित सुहाए ॥ २ ॥
कथा अरंभ करै सोइ चाहा । तेही समय गयउ खगनाहा ॥
आवत देखि सकल खग राजा । हरषेउ बायस सहित समाजा ॥ ३ ॥
अति आदर खगपति कर कीन्हा । स्वागत पूछि सुआसन दीन्हा ॥
करि पूजा समेत अनुरागा । मधुर बचन तब बोलेउ कागा ॥ ४ ॥

Garuḍa went to the abode of Bhuśuṇḍi (Kākabhuśuṇḍi) of unhampered intellect and possessing uninterrupted devotion to Śrī Hari. At the sight of the mountain his heart rejoiced and he was rid of all Māyā (delusion), infatuation and anxiety. After bathing in the tarn and drinking of its water he betook himself under the banyan tree, delighted at heart. Aged birds of all kinds flocked there to hear Śrī Rāma's charming exploits. Bhuśuṇḍi was just on the point of commencing the narration when the king of the birds arrived. All were rejoiced to see the king of the whole feathered creation approach, the crow no less than the rest of the assembly. Bhuśuṇḍi received the king of the birds with the utmost reverence and, having enquired after his welfare, conducted him to an exalted seat. After offering him loving worship the crow addressed him in honeyed accents:— (1—4)

दो०—नाथ कृतारथ भयउँ मैं तव दरसन खगराज ।
आयसु देहु सो करौं अब प्रभु आयहु केहि काज ॥ ६३ (क) ॥
सदा कृतारथ रूप तुम्ह कह मृदु बचन खगेस ।
जेहि कै अस्तुति सादर निज मुख कीन्हि महेस ॥ ६३ (ख) ॥

"My lord, I have been blessed by your sight; now let me do whatever you bid me, O king of the birds. With what object have you come, my master ?" "You have always been a picture of blessedness," replied the lord of the feathered kingdom in gentle phrase, "as I find that the great Lord Śiva reverently extolled you with His own mouth. (63 A-B)

चौ०—सुनहु तात जेहि कारन आयउँ। सो सब भयउ दरस तव पायउँ॥
देखि परम पावन तव आश्रम। गयउ मोह संसय नाना भ्रम॥ १॥
अब श्रीराम कथा अति पावनि। सदा सुखद दुख पुंज नसावनि॥
सादर तात सुनावहु मोही। बार बार बिनवउँ प्रभु तोही॥ २॥
सुनत गरुड़ कै गिरा बिनीता। सरल सुप्रेम सुखद सुपुनीता॥
भयउ तासु मन परम उछाहा। लाग कहै रघुपति गुन गाहा॥ ३॥
प्रथमहिं अति अनुराग भवानी। रामचरित सर कहेसि बखानी॥
पुनि नारद कर मोह अपारा। कहेसि बहुरि रावन अवतारा॥ ४॥
प्रभु अवतार कथा पुनि गाई। तब सिसु चरित कहेसि मन लाई॥ ५॥

"Listen, dear father: the object for which I came has already been fully accomplished and I have also had the privilege of seeing you. At the very sight of your most holy hermitage my infatuation, doubt and many misconceptions have been removed. Now, dear father, narrate to me with due reverence the most sacred story of Śrī Rāma, which is ever delightful and a cure for all sufferings. This is what I beg of you again and again." The moment Bhuśuṇḍi heard Garuḍa's prayer, humble, sincere, loving, delightful and pious, a supreme joy diffused over his soul and he commenced recounting the virtues of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). First of all, with fervent devotion, Bhavānī, he gave an elaborate description of the lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits. Next he told about Nārada's terrible infatuation and then of Rāvaṇa's incarnation. Thereafter he sang the story of the Lord's descent and then recounted with deep interest His childish sports. (1—5)

दो०—बालचरित कहि बिबिधि बिधि मन महँ परम उछाह।
रिषि आगवन कहेसि पुनि श्री रघुबीर बिबाह॥ ६४॥

After narrating His boyish sports of various kinds with the utmost rapture of soul he told of the sage's (Viśwāmitra's) arrival and thereafter of Śrī Rāma's wedding. (64)

चौ०—बहुरि राम अभिषेक प्रसंगा। पुनि नृप बचन राज रस भंगा॥
पुरबासिन्ह कर बिरह बिषादा। कहेसि राम लछिमन संबादा॥ १॥
बिपिन गवन केवट अनुरागा। सुरसरि उतरि निवास प्रयागा॥
बालमीक प्रभु मिलन बखाना। चित्रकूट जिमि बसे भगवाना॥ २॥
सचिवागवन नगर नृप मरना। भरतागवन प्रेम बहु बरना॥
करि नृप क्रिया संग पुरबासी। भरत गए जहँ प्रभु सुख रासी॥ ३॥
पुनि रघुपति बहु बिधि समुझाए। लै पादुका अवधपुर आए॥
भरत रहनि सुरपति सुत करनी। प्रभु अरु अत्रि भेंट पुनि बरनी॥ ४॥

Then he narrated the episode of Śrī Rāma's projected installation (as the Prince-Regent of Ayodhyā) and after that he spoke of the sudden interruption in the festivities connected with the installation due to King

Daśaratha's solemn pledge (to Kaikeyī), as well as of the citizens' agony at Rāma's parting. He then reproduced the dialogue between Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa and further described their journey to the forest, the devotion of the boatman and their ferrying across the celestial stream (Gangā) and halt at Prayāga. He further described the Lord's meeting with the sage Vālmiki and how the divine Śrī Rāma sojourned at Chitrakūṭa. Again, he then told of the minister's (Sumantra's) return to the capital, the King's demise, Bharata's coming back (from his maternal grandfather's), as well as his abundant love (for Śrī Rāma). He further related how after performing the King's obsequies Bharata with all the citizens betook himself to where the All-blissful Lord was, and how when the Lord of the Raghus consoled him in every way he took the Lord's sandals and returned to the city of Ayodhyā. Bhuśuṇḍi continued and described Bharata's mode of life (at Nandigrāma), the (mischievous) conduct of Jayanta (the son of Indra, the lord of the celestials) and the Lord's meeting with the sage Atri.

(1–4)

दो०—कहि बिराध बध जेहि बिधि देह तजी सरभंग ।
बरनि सुतीछन प्रीति पुनि प्रभु अगस्ति सतसंग ॥ ६५ ॥

After giving an account of Virādha's death (at the hands of the Lord) he told how the sage Śarabhanga dropped his body, and further described Sutīkṣṇa's devotion and also the Lord's holy communion with the sage Agastya. (65)

चौ०—कहि दंडक बन पावनताई । गीध मइत्री पुनि तेहिं गाई ॥
पुनि प्रभु पंचबटीं कृत बासा । भंजी सकल मुनिन्ह की त्रासा ॥ १ ॥
पुनि लछिमन उपदेस अनूपा । सूपनखा जिमि कीन्हि कुरूपा ॥
खर दूषन बध बहुरि बखाना । जिमि सब मरमु दसानन जाना ॥ २ ॥
दसकंधर मारीच बतकही । जेहि बिधि भई सो सब तेहिं कही ॥
पुनि माया सीता कर हरना । श्रीरघुबीर बिरह कछु बरना ॥ ३ ॥
पुनि प्रभु गीध क्रिया जिमि कीन्ही । बधि कबंध सबरिहि गति दीन्ही ॥
बहुरि बिरह बरनत रघुबीरा । जेहि बिधि गए सरोबर तीरा ॥ ४ ॥

After speaking about the purification of the Daṇḍaka forest Bhuśuṇḍi told of the Lord's friendship with the vulture king (Jaṭāyu). He further narrated how the Lord took up His abode at Pañchavaṭī and dissipated the fears of all the hermits. Then came the Lord's incomparable exhortation to Lakṣmaṇa and the story of Śūrpaṇakhā's mutilation. He further narrated the death of Khara and Dūṣaṇa (at the Lord's hands) and how Rāvaṇa (the ten-headed monster) got all the information. Again, he then told all the particulars of the latter's talk with Mārīcha. Thereafter he described the abduction of the fictitious Sītā and briefly referred to the desolation of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line). After this he told how the Lord performed the exequies of the vulture king, slew the demon Kabandha and bestowed the highest state (final beatitude) on Śabarī (the Bhil woman), and further narrated how the Hero of Raghu's line went to the bank of the Pampā lake, bewailing His desolation all the way.

(1–4)

दो०—प्रभु नारद संबाद कहि मारुति मिलन प्रसंग ।
पुनि सुग्रीव मिताई बालि प्रान कर भंग ॥ ६६ (क) ॥
कपिहि तिलक करि प्रभु कृत सैल प्रबरषन बास ।
बरनन बर्षा सरद अरु राम रोष कपि त्रास ॥ ६६ (ख) ॥

After repeating the Lord's talk with the sage Nārada as well as the episode of His meeting with the son of the wind-god, Bhuśuṇḍi told of Śrī Rāma's alliance with Sugrīva and of Vālī's death at His hands. He further related how after installing Sugrīva (on the throne of Kiṣkindhā) the Lord took up His abode on Mount Pravarṣaṇa, gave an account of the rains as well as of the autumn that immediately followed and told of Śrī Rāma's wrath on Sugrīva and the latter's dismay. (66 A-B)

चौ०—जेहि बिधि कपिपति कीस पठाए । सीता खोज सकल दिसि धाए ॥
बिबर प्रबेस कीन्ह जेहि भाँती । कपिन्ह बहोरि मिला संपाती ॥ १ ॥
सुनि सब कथा समीरकुमारा । नाघत भयउ पयोधि अपारा ॥
लंकाँ कपि प्रबेस जिमि कीन्हा । पुनि सीतहि धीरजु जिमि दीन्हा ॥ २ ॥
बन उजारि रावनहि प्रबोधी । पुर दहि नाघेउ बहुरि पयोधी ॥
आए कपि सब जहँ रघुराई । बैदेही की कुसल सुनाई ॥ ३ ॥
सेन समेति जथा रघुबीरा । उतरे जाइ बारिनिधि तीरा ॥
मिला बिभीषन जेहि बिधि आई । सागर निग्रह कथा सुनाई ॥ ४ ॥

The crow further narrated how Sugrīva (the lord of the monkeys) sent out monkeys, who rushed forth in every direction in quest of Sītā; how the party sent to the south entered a cave and were met later on by Sampātī (Jaṭāyu's elder brother); how after hearing all the news from him the son of the wind-god jumped over the vast ocean, how the monkey chief made his way into Laṅkā and how later on he saw and reassured Sītā; how after laying waste the grove (where Sītā had been lodged) and exhorting Rāvaṇa he set fire to his capital and leapt back across the sea; how the whole party of the monkeys rejoined the Lord of the Raghus and told Him of Sītā's welfare and how the Hero of Raghu's line with His army went and encamped on the seashore and how Vibhīṣaṇa came and saw Him; and further recited the story of the ocean's subjugation. (1—4)

दो०—सेतु बाँधि कपि सेन जिमि उतरी सागर पार ।
गयउ बसीठी बीरबर जेहि बिधि बालिकुमार ॥ ६७ (क) ॥
निसिचर कीस लराई बरनिसि बिबिधि प्रकार ।
कुंभकरन घननाद कर बल पौरुष संघार ॥ ६७ (ख) ॥

Bhuśuṇḍi then narrated how after building a bridge across the ocean the monkey host crossed over to the other side and how the most heroic son of Vālī went as an envoy to Rāvaṇa. He further described the conflict between the demons and the monkeys in all its phases, and in course of it the might and valour, and eventually the destruction, of Kumbhakarṇa and Meghanāda. (67 A-B)

चौ०—निसिचर निकर मरन बिधि नाना । रघुपति रावन समर बखाना ॥
रावन बध मंदोदरि सोका । राज बिभीषन देव असोका ॥ १ ॥
सीता रघुपति मिलन बहोरी । सुरन्ह कीन्हि अस्तुति कर जोरी ॥
पुनि पुष्पक चढ़ि कपिन्ह समेता । अवध चले प्रभु कृपा निकेता ॥ २ ॥
जेहि बिधि राम नगर निज आए । बायस बिसद चरित सब गाए ॥
कहेसि बहोरि राम अभिषेका । पुर बरनत नृपनीति अनेका ॥ ३ ॥
कथा समस्त भुसुंड बखानी । जो मैं तुम्ह सन कही भवानी ॥
सुनि सब राम कथा खगनाहा । कहत बचन मन परम उछाहा ॥ ४ ॥

The crow then told about the extermination of the demon host and the various phases of the combat between the Lord of the Raghus and Rāvaṇa, Rāvaṇa's death and Mandodarī's lament, the enthronement of Vibhīṣaṇa, the cessation of the gods' sorrow and Sītā's reunion with the Lord of the Raghus. He further narrated how the gods with joined palms hymned the Lord's praises, how the all-merciful Lord then mounted the aerial car known by the name of Puṣpaka along with the monkeys and flew to Ayodhyā and how Śrī Rāma arrived at His own capital and all such holy doings. He then told of Śrī Rāma's coronation and also described the city and all its kingly polity. In this way Bhuśuṇḍi narrated the whole story as I have already told you, Bhavānī. When he heard the whole of Śrī Rāma's narrative, Garuḍa's mind was filled with rapture and he spoke as follows:— (1—4)

सो०—गयउ मोर संदेह सुनेउँ सकल रघुपति चरित ।
भयउ राम पद नेह तव प्रसाद बायस तिलक ॥ ६८ (क) ॥
मोहि भयउ अति मोह प्रभु बंधन रन महुँ निरखि ।
चिदानंद संदोह राम बिकल कारन कवन ॥ ६८ (ख) ॥

"My doubts have gone, now that I have heard the whole of Śrī Rāma's narrative. And by your grace, O best of crows, I have developed devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet. A mighty bewilderment possessed me when I saw the Lord bound in battle: Śrī Rāma is Knowledge and Bliss personified; how can He be embarrassed? (68 A-B)

चौ०—देखि चरित अति नर अनुसारी । भयउ हृदयँ मम संसय भारी ॥
सोइ भ्रम अब हित करि मैं माना । कीन्ह अनुग्रह कृपानिधाना ॥ १ ॥
जो अति आतप ब्याकुल होई । तरु छाया सुख जानइ सोई ॥
जौं नहिं होत मोह अति मोही । मिलतेउँ तात कवन बिधि तोही ॥ २ ॥
सुनतेउँ किमि हरि कथा सुहाई । अति बिचित्र बहु बिधि तुम्ह गाई ॥
निगमागम पुरान मत एहा । कहहिं सिद्ध मुनि नहिं संदेहा ॥ ३ ॥
संत बिसुद्ध मिलहिं परि तेही । चितवहिं राम कृपा करि जेही ॥
राम कृपाँ तव दरसन भयऊ । तव प्रसाद सब संसय गयऊ ॥ ४ ॥

"As I found His ways so closely resembling those of a human being, a grievous doubt arose in my soul. Now I regard that error of mine as a bless-

ing and feel that the All-merciful bestowed a favour on me (in the form of that error). For he alone who is terribly oppressed with the heat of the sun can appreciate the blessing of an umbrageous tree. Had I not thus fallen a prey to gross infatuation, how could it have been possible for me to meet you, revered sir, and how could I get an opportunity to hear the charming and most wonderful story of Śrī Hari that you have just sung in all its details. The Vedas, the Tantras and the Purāṇas are at one on this point and so declare the Siddhas and sages in unequivocal terms that the fellowship of genuine saints is only attained by those whom Śrī Rāma regards with favour. By Śrī Rāma's grace I have been blessed with your sight and by your blessing, again, all my doubts have disappeared." (1—4)

दो०—सुनि बिहंगपति बानी सहित बिनय अनुराग ।
पुलक गात लोचन सजल मन हरषेउ अति काग ॥ ६९ (क) ॥
श्रोता सुमति सुसील सुचि कथा रसिक हरि दास ।
पाइ उमा अति गोप्यमपि सज्जन करहिं प्रकास ॥ ६९ (ख) ॥

On hearing Garuḍa's speech, so modest and affectionate, the crow was greatly rejoiced at heart: every hair on his body stood erect and tears rushed to his eyes. Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) saints reveal their profoundest secrets when they find a listener who is not only intelligent, virtuous and pious, but fond of Śrī Rāma's story and a devotee of Śrī Hari. (69 A-B)

चौ०—बोलेउ काकभसुंड बहोरी । नभग नाथ पर प्रीति न थोरी ॥
सब बिधि नाथ पूज्य तुम्ह मेरे । कृपापात्र रघुनायक केरे ॥ १ ॥
तुम्हहि न संसय मोह न माया । मो पर नाथ कीन्हि तुम्ह दाया ॥
पठइ मोह मिस खगपति तोही । रघुपति दीन्हि बड़ाई मोही ॥ २ ॥
तुम्ह निज मोह कही खग साईं । सो नहिं कछु आचरज गोसाईं ॥
नारद भव बिरंचि सनकादी । जे मुनिनायक आतमबादी ॥ ३ ॥
मोह न अंध कीन्ह केहि केही । को जग काम नचाव न जेही ॥
तृस्नाँ केहि न कीन्ह बौराहा । केहि कर हृदय क्रोध नहिं दाहा ॥ ४ ॥

Then answered Kākabhuśuṇḍi, who had no small affection for the lord of the feathered creation: "My lord, you are in every way entitled to my homage, a recipient as you are of Śrī Rāma's favour. You had neither doubt nor infatuation, nor delusion; it was only an excuse, my lord, for doing me a kindness. By sending you, O king of the birds, under the pretext of infatuation the Lord of the Raghus has conferred an honour on me. Yet, my lord, there is nothing peculiar in that delusion of yours of which you have told me, O king of the birds; for the celestial sage Nārada, Bhava (Lord Śiva) and Virañchi (the Creator), as well as Sanaka and the other great sages, exponents of the truth of the Spirit,—which of these has not been blinded by infatuation? Again, is there anyone in this world whom lust has not made a puppet of? Who has not been maddened by the thirst for enjoyment and whose heart has not been inflamed by anger? (1—4)

दो०—ग्यानी तापस सूर कबि कोबिद गुन आगार ।
केहि कै लोभ बिडंबना कीन्हि न एहिं संसार ॥ ७० (क) ॥
श्रीमद बक्र न कीन्ह केहि प्रभुता बधिर न काहि ।
मृगलोचनि के नैन सर को अस लाग न जाहि ॥ ७० (ख) ॥

Is there any sage, ascetic, hero, seer, man of learning or man of virtue in this world, whom greed has not betrayed ? Again, whom has the pride of pelf not perverted ? Who has not been deafened by power ? And is there anyone who has not been smitten by the shaft-like glances of a fawn-eyed woman ? (70 A-B)

चौ०—गुन कृत सन्यपात नहिं केही । कोउ न मान मद तजेउ निबेही ॥
जोबन ज्वर केहि नहिं बलकावा । ममता केहि कर जस न नसावा ॥ १ ॥
मच्छर काहि कलंक न लावा । काहि न सोक समीर डोलावा ॥
चिंता साँपिनि को नहिं खाया । को जग जाहि न ब्यापी माया ॥ २ ॥
कीट मनोरथ दारु सरीरा । जेहि न लाग घुन को अस धीरा ॥
सुत बित लोक ईषना तीनी । केहि कै मति इन्ह कृत न मलीनी ॥ ३ ॥
यह सब माया कर परिवारा । प्रबल अमिति को बरनै पारा ॥
सिव चतुरानन जाहि डेराहीं । अपर जीव केहि लेखे माहीं ॥ ४ ॥

Who is not thrown out of his mental equipoise by the combined action of the three Gunas (modes of Prakṛti) as by the synchronous derangement of the three humours of the body (which generally proves fatal to the victim according to the principles of Āyurveda) ? None has escaped the stings of pride and arrogance. Who does not get wildly excited under an attack of fever in the form of youth and whose good reputation is not marred by worldly attachment ? Who does not incur obloquy through envy and who is not shaken by the blast of grief ? Who is not bitten by the serpent of care ? And is there anyone in this world who is not overcome by Māyā (the delusive potency of God) ? Again, is there anyone so resolute of mind, whose body is not being consumed by desire as a piece of wood is eaten away by a wooded-borer ? Whose mind has not been polluted by the threefold desire—the desire of progeny, the desire of wealth and the desire of fame ? All these constitute the retinue of Māyā, formidable and infinite in number, more than any can tell. Even Lord Śiva and the four-faced Brahmā (the Creator) are ever afraid of these; of what account, then, are other creatures ? (1—4)

दो०—ब्यापि रहेउ संसार महुँ माया कटक प्रचंड ।
सेनापति कामादि भट दंभ कपट पाषंड ॥ ७१ (क) ॥
सो दासी रघुबीर कै समुझें मिथ्या सोपि ।
छूट न राम कृपा बिनु नाथ कहउँ पद रोपि ॥ ७१ (ख) ॥

Māyā's formidable army is spread over the whole universe. Concupiscence and others (viz., Anger and Greed) are its generals; Hypocrisy, Deceit and

Heresy its champions. That Māyā, however, is Śrī Rāma's own handmaid; though unreal when understood, there is no release from her grip except by Śrī Rāma's grace: I declare this with the utmost confidence. (71 A-B)

चौ०—जो माया सब जगहि नचावा। जासु चरित लखि काहुँ न पावा॥
सोइ प्रभु भ्रू बिलास खगराजा। नाच नटी इव सहित समाजा॥ १॥
सोइ सच्चिदानंद घन रामा। अज बिग्यान रूप बल धामा॥
ब्यापक ब्याप्य अखंड अनंता। अखिल अमोघसक्ति भगवंता॥ २॥
अगुन अदभ्र गिरा गोतीता। सबदरसी अनवद्य अजीता॥
निर्मम निराकार निरमोहा। नित्य निरंजन सुख संदोहा॥ ३॥
प्रकृति पार प्रभु सब उर बासी। ब्रह्म निरीह बिरज अबिनासी॥
इहाँ मोह कर कारन नाहीं। रबि सन्मुख तम कबहुँ कि जाहीं॥ ४॥

The same Māyā that has made a puppet of the whole world and whose ways are unknown to anyone, dances with all her troupe like an actress on the stage to the play of the Lord's eyebrows, O king of birds. Such is Śrī Rāma, who is devoid of birth, the totality of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, wisdom personified, the home of beauty and strength. He is both pervading and pervaded, fractionless, infinite and integral, the Lord of unfailing power, unqualified, vast, transcending speech as well as the other senses, all-seeing, free from blemish, invincible, unattached, devoid of form, free from error, eternal and untainted by Māyā, beyond the realm of Prakṛti (Matter), bliss personified, the Lord indwelling the heart of all, the actionless Brahma, free from passion and imperishable. In Him error finds no ground to stand upon; can the shades of darkness ever approach the sun? (1—4)

दो०—भगत हेतु भगवान प्रभु राम धरेउ तनु भूप।
किए चरित पावन परम प्राकृत नर अनुरूप॥ ७२ (क)॥
जथा अनेक बेष धरि नृत्य करइ नट कोइ।
सोइ सोइ भाव देखावइ आपुन होइ न सोइ॥ ७२ (ख)॥

For the sake of His devotees, the divine Lord Śrī Rāma took the form of an earthly sovereign and performed most sacred deeds, in the manner of an ordinary mortal, even as an actor, while acting on the stage, assumes various guises and exhibits different characters but himself remains the same. (72 A-B)

चौ०—असि रघुपति लीला उरगारी। दनुज बिमोहनि जन सुखकारी॥
जे मति मलिन बिषयबस कामी। प्रभु पर मोह धरहिं इमि स्वामी॥ १॥
नयन दोष जा कहँ जब होई। पीत बरन ससि कहुँ कह सोई॥
जब जेहि दिसि भ्रम होइ खगेसा। सो कह पच्छिम उयउ दिनेसा॥ २॥
नौकारूढ़ चलत जग देखा। अचल मोह बस आपुहि लेखा॥
बालक भ्रमहिं न भ्रमहिं गृहादी। कहहिं परस्पर मिथ्याबादी॥ ३॥

हरि बिषइक अस मोह बिहंगा। सपनेहुँ नहिं अग्यान प्रसंगा ॥
मायाबस मतिमंद अभागी। हृदयँ जमनिका बहुबिधि लागी ॥ ४ ॥
ते सठ हठ बस संसय करहीं। निज अग्यान राम पर धरहीं ॥ ५ ॥

Such, O enemy of serpents, is the pastime of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), a bewilderment to the demons but a delight to His servants. Those who are impure of mind, given over to the pleasures of sense and slaves of passion attribute infatuation to the Lord in the following manner, my master. He who has a jaundiced eye declares the moon as of a yellow colour so long as the disease is there. When a man is bewildered as to the points of the compass, O Garuḍa, he affirms that the sun has risen in the west. A man who is sailing on a boat finds the world moving and deludes himself with the idea that he himself is standing still. Children whirl round in play, but not the surrounding buildings etc.; yet they dub one another a liar (when some of them insist that it is they themselves who are moving). It is in this way, O king of the birds, that error is ascribed to Śrī Hari; otherwise not even in a dream is He subject to delusion. Those dull-witted wretches who are dominated by Māyā and who have many a veil hanging over their soul, such fools alone raise doubts in their perversity and ascribe their own ignorance to Śrī Rāma.

(1–5)

दो०—काम क्रोध मद लोभ रत गृहासक्त दुखरूप।
ते किमि जानहिं रघुपतिहि मूढ़ परे तम कूप ॥ ७३ (क) ॥
निर्गुन रूप सुलभ अति सगुन जान नहिं कोइ।
सुगम अगम नाना चरित सुनि मुनि मन भ्रम होइ ॥ ७३ (ख) ॥

Steeped in lust, anger, arrogance and greed and attached to their home, which is a picture of woe, how can such dullards know the Lord of the Raghus, fallen as they are in the depths of darkness (ignorance)? The attributeless aspect of the Godhead is easy to understand; but no one can comprehend the embodied form (which is beyond all modes of Prakṛti and divine in character). Even a sage's soul is bewildered on hearing of the various exploits of the Lord, both of an intelligible and baffling character.

(73 A-B)

चौ०—सुनु खगेस रघुपति प्रभुताई। कहउँ जथामति कथा सुहाई ॥
जेहि बिधि मोह भयउ प्रभु मोही। सोउ सब कथा सुनावउँ तोही ॥ १ ॥
राम कृपा भाजन तुम्ह ताता। हरि गुन प्रीति मोहि सुखदाता ॥
ताते नहिं कछु तुम्हहि दुरावउँ। परम रहस्य मनोहर गावउँ ॥ २ ॥
सुनहु राम कर सहज सुभाऊ। जन अभिमान न राखहिं काऊ ॥
संसृत मूल सूलप्रद नाना। सकल सोक दायक अभिमाना ॥ ३ ॥
ताते करहिं कृपानिधि दूरी। सेवक पर ममता अति भूरी ॥
जिमि सिसु तन ब्रन होइ गोसाईं। मातु चिराव कठिन की नाईं ॥ ४ ॥

"Hear, O lord of the feathered kingdom, of the greatness of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). I recite to you according to the best of my lights a

delightful story in this connection. I shall also narrate to you the whole story as to how I fell a prey to delusion, my lord. You, dear Garuḍa, are a favourite of Śrī Rāma and fond of hearing Śrī Hari's praises and a source of delight to me. I am, therefore, concealing nothing from you and tell you a profound and charming secret. Hear of Śrī Rāma's innate disposition: He never tolerates pride in His people. For pride is the root of metempsychosis and the cause of all kinds of pain and every form of grief. Hence the All-merciful gets rid of it in His extreme fondness for His servants, even as when a boil appears on the body of a child, my lord, the mother gets it opened like one having a stony heart. (1—4)

दो०—जदपि प्रथम दुख पावइ रोवइ बाल अधीर।
ब्याधि नास हित जननी गनति न सो सिसु पीर ॥ ७४ (क) ॥
तिमि रघुपति निज दास कर हरहिं मान हित लागि।
तुलसिदास ऐसे प्रभुहि कस न भजहु भ्रम त्यागि ॥ ७४ (ख) ॥

Although at first (while the boil is being cut open) the child experiences pain and cries helplessly the mother minds not the child's agony, in her anxiety to see the child cured. Even so, in the interest of the devotee himself, the Lord of the Raghus takes away his pride. Forswearing all error, Tulasidāsa, why should you not adore such a lord as this? (74 A-B)

चौ०—राम कृपा आपनि जड़ताई। कहउँ खगेस सुनहु मन लाई ॥
जब जब राम मनुज तनु धरहीं। भक्त हेतु लीला बहु करहीं ॥ १ ॥
तब तब अवधपुरी मैं जाऊँ। बालचरित बिलोकि हरषाऊँ ॥
जन्म महोत्सव देखउँ जाई। बरष पाँच तहँ रहउँ लोभाई ॥ २ ॥
इष्टदेव मम बालक रामा। सोभा बपुष कोटि सत कामा ॥
निज प्रभु बदन निहारि निहारी। लोचन सुफल करउँ उरगारी ॥ ३ ॥
लघु बायस बपु धरि हरि संगा। देखउँ बालचरित बहु रंगा ॥ ४ ॥

Now, O lord of the feathered kingdom, I tell you of Śrī Rāma's benignity and my own opacity; listen attentively. Whenever Śrī Rāma appears in human semblance and enacts numberless sports for the sake of His devotees I betake myself to the city of Ayodhyā and delight to watch His childish exploits. I go and witness the grand festival of His birth and, fascinated (by the charm of His childish sports), stay on there for full five years. The child Rāma is my beloved deity, who sums up in His person the charm of countless Cupids. Ever gazing on the countenance of my lord, I allow my eyes to enjoy the fruit of their existence, O enemy of serpents. Assuming the form of a small crow and remaining in the company of Śrī Hari I witness His childish exploits of all kinds. (1—4)

दो०—लरिकाईं जहँ जहँ फिरहिं तहँ तहँ संग उड़ाउँ।
जूठनि परइ अजिर महँ सो उठाइ करि खाउँ ॥ ७५ (क) ॥
एक बार अतिसय सब चरित किए रघुबीर।
सुमिरत प्रभु लीला सोइ पुलकित भयउ सरीर ॥ ७५ (ख) ॥

Wherever He moves about as a child I flutter about close to Him. And the crumbs that fall from His mouth in the courtyard I pick up and eat. In one particular cycle the Hero of Raghu's line performed all His exploits in an extreme degree." The moment Kākabhuśuṇḍi recalled those exploits every hair on his body stood erect. (75 A-B)

चौ०—कहइ भसुंड सुनहु खगनायक । राम चरित सेवक सुखदायक ॥
नृप मंदिर सुंदर सब भाँती । खचित कनक मनि नाना जाती ॥ १ ॥
बरनि न जाइ रुचिर अँगनाई । जहँ खेलहिं नित चारिउ भाई ॥
बालबिनोद करत रघुराई । बिचरत अजिर जननि सुखदाई ॥ २ ॥
मरकत मृदुल कलेवर स्यामा । अंग अंग प्रति छबि बहु कामा ॥
नव राजीव अरुन मृदु चरना । पदज रुचिर नख ससि दुति हरना ॥ ३ ॥
ललित अंक कुलिसादिक चारी । नूपुर चारु मधुर रवकारी ॥
चारु पुरट मनि रचित बनाई । कटि किंकिनि कल मुखर सुहाई ॥ ४ ॥

Continued Bhuśuṇḍi: "Listen, O chief of the birds: the story of Śrī Rāma is the delight of His servants. The king's palace (at Ayodhyā) was beautiful in every way: it was all of gold studded with precious stones of various kinds. The courtyard, where the four brothers played every day, was magnificent beyond description. The Lord of the Raghus frolicked about in this yard carrying on childish pastimes that were the delight of His mother. His tender frame was dark of hue with a greenish tinge resembling that of the emerald; every limb of it had the loveliness of numberless Cupids compressed into it. His feet were soft and ruddy like a young lotus, with bright toes and nails that outshone the brilliance of the moon. They had soles bearing the fourfold lovely marks of the thunderbolt, the elephant-goad, the flag and the lotus, and were adorned with beautiful anklets that sweetly jingled. The charming zone about His waist, which was made of gold bossed with jewels produced a pleasant tinkling sound. (1—4)

दो०—रेखा त्रय सुंदर उदर नाभी रुचिर गँभीर ।
उर आयत भ्राजत बिबिधि बाल बिभूषन चीर ॥ ७६ ॥

The belly contained three lovely folds with a charming deep navel. The broad chest gleamed with jewels and raiment of various kinds, all befitting a child. (76)

चौ०—अरुन पानि नख करज मनोहर । बाहु बिसाल बिभूषन सुंदर ॥
कंध बाल केहरि दर ग्रीवा । चारु चिबुक आनन छबि सींवा ॥ १ ॥
कलबल बचन अधर अरुनारे । दुइ दुइ दसन बिसद बर बारे ॥
ललित कपोल मनोहर नासा । सकल सुखद ससि कर सम हासा ॥ २ ॥
नील कंज लोचन भव मोचन । भ्राजत भाल तिलक गोरोचन ॥
बिकट भृकुटि सम श्रवन सुहाए । कुंचित कच मेचक छबि छाए ॥ ३ ॥
पीत झीनि झगुली तन सोही । किलकनि चितवनि भावति मोही ॥
रूप रासि नृप अजिर बिहारी । नाचहिं निज प्रतिबिंब निहारी ॥ ४ ॥

मोहि सन करहिं बिबिधि बिधि क्रीड़ा । बरनत मोहि होति अति ब्रीड़ा ॥
किलकत मोहि धरन जब धावहिं । चलउँ भागि तब पूप देखावहिं ॥ ५ ॥

His roseate hands, nails and fingers were all captivating; His long arms were richly adorned. He had shoulders resembling those of a lion's cub and a neck shaped like a conch, a lovely chin and a face which was the very perfection of beauty. His speech was yet indistinct, His lips rosy and His mouth contained a pair of small pearly and shapely teeth both above and below. He had lovely cheeks, a charming nose and a smile which afforded delight and was bright as the rays of the moon. His eyes, which resembled a pair of blue lotuses, undid the bonds of worldly existence; while His forehead gleamed with a sacred mark made with yellow pigment. He had arched eyebrows, pretty well-matched ears and curly darkblue hair that scattered their charm all round. A thin yellow garment set off His swarthy person, and His shrill gleeful cry and glance captivated me. Thus frolicking in the courtyard of the royal palace, the All-beautiful danced at the sight of His own shadow and played with me in diverse ways, which I blush to tell you. Crying with joy as He ran to catch hold of me, I flew away; then He showed me a piece of sweet cake. (1—5)

दो०—आवत निकट हँसहिं प्रभु भाजत रुदन कराहिं ।
जाउँ समीप गहन पद फिरि फिरि चितइ पराहिं ॥ ७७ (क) ॥
प्राकृत सिसु इव लीला देखि भयउ मोहि मोह ।
कवन चरित्र करत प्रभु चिदानंद संदोह ॥ ७७ (ख) ॥

As I went near Him, the Lord smiled; but the moment I flew away He fell a-crying. And when I approached Him to lay hold of His feet He scampered off, turning round again and again to look at me. Seeing Him play like an ordinary child I was overcome by bewilderment: "What! are these actions in any way worthy of Him who is knowledge and bliss personified?" (77 A-B)

चौ०—एतना मन आनत खगराया । रघुपति प्रेरित ब्यापी माया ॥
सो माया न दुखद मोहि काहीं । आन जीव इव संसृत नाहीं ॥ १ ॥
नाथ इहाँ कछु कारन आना । सुनहु सो सावधान हरिजाना ॥
ग्यान अखंड एक सीताबर । माया बस्य जीव सचराचर ॥ २ ॥
जौं सब कें रह ग्यान एकरस । ईस्वर जीवहि भेद कहहु कस ॥
माया बस्य जीव अभिमानी । ईस बस्य माया गुन खानी ॥ ३ ॥
परबस जीव स्वबस भगवंता । जीव अनेक एक श्रीकंता ॥
मुधा भेद जद्यपि कृत माया । बिनु हरि जाइ न कोटि उपाया ॥ ४ ॥

The moment I allowed this doubt to enter my mind, O king of the birds, Śrī Rāma's Māyā (delusive power) took possession of me as directed by the Lord of the Raghus. That Māyā, however, did not prove to be a source of trouble to me, nor did it throw me into the whirlpool of birth and death as it does in the case of other creatures. This, my lord, was attributable to

some extraordinary reason. Hear it attentively, O mount of Śrī Hari. Sītā's Spouse alone is absolute intelligence; every creature, whether animate or inanimate, is subject to Māyā. If all had the same perfect wisdom, tell me, what would be the difference between God and the Jīva (the individual soul)? The latter, which identifies itself with a particular psycho-physical organism, is subject to Māyā; while Māyā itself, the source of the three Guṇas, is controlled by God. The Jīva is dependent (subject to Māyā), while God is self-dependent. The Jīvas are many, while the Beloved of Lakṣmī is one (without a second). Even though this difference, which has been created by Māyā, is false, it cannot disappear except by Śrī Hari's grace, whatever you may do.

(1—4)

दो०—रामचंद्र के भजन बिनु जो चह पद निर्बान ।
ग्यानवंत अपि सो नर पसु बिनु पूँछ बिषान ॥ ७८ (क) ॥
राकापति षोड़स उअहिं तारागन समुदाइ ।
सकल गिरिन्ह दव लाइअ बिनु रबि राति न जाइ ॥ ७८ (ख) ॥

The man who seeks to attain the state of eternal bliss without adoring Śrī Rāmachandra is a beast without tail and horns, however wise he may be. Even though the moon rose complete in all her sixteen digits with the entire starry host, and even if all the mountains were set on fire, night would not yield except to the sun.

(78 A-B)

चौ०—ऐसेहिं हरि बिनु भजन खगेसा । मिटइ न जीवन्ह केर कलेसा ॥
हरि सेवकहि न ब्याप अबिद्या । प्रभु प्रेरित ब्यापइ तेहि बिद्या ॥ १ ॥
ताते नास न होइ दास कर । भेद भगति बाढ़इ बिहंगबर ॥
भ्रम तें चकित राम मोहि देखा । बिहँसे सो सुनु चरित बिसेषा ॥ २ ॥
तेहि कौतुक कर मरमु न काहूँ । जाना अनुज न मातु पिताहूँ ॥
जानु पानि धाए मोहि धरना । स्यामल गात अरुन कर चरना ॥ ३ ॥
तब मैं भागि चलेउँ उरगारी । राम गहन कहँ भुजा पसारी ॥
जिमि जिमि दूरि उड़ाउँ अकासा । तहँ भुज हरि देखउँ निज पासा ॥ ४ ॥

In like manner, O lord of the feathered race mortals cannot be rid of their suffering without adoring Śrī Hari. Avidyā (Nescience) has no power over a servant of Śrī Hari; it is Vidyā (knowledge of Brahma in Its relative aspect) that holds sway over him as directed by the Lord. That is why a servant of the Lord never falls; on the other hand, O best of birds, his devotion to the Lord as apart from himself grows. Śrī Rāma smiled to see me bewildered with error: now hear further particulars in this connection. The secret of this diversion nobody came to know neither His younger brothers nor His parents. The Lord with a swarthy form and rosy hands and feet crawled on His hands and knees in order to catch me. Thereupon, O enemy of serpents, I took to flight. Śrī Rāma stretched out His arm to lay hold on me. Away as I flew into the air I saw Śrī Hari's arm close to me everywhere.

(1—4)

दो०—ब्रह्मलोक लगि गयउँ मैं चितयउँ पाछ उड़ात ।
जुग अंगुल कर बीच सब राम भुजहि मोहि तात ॥ ७९ (क) ॥
सप्ताबरन भेद करि जहाँ लगें गति मोरि ।
गयउँ तहाँ प्रभु भुज निरखि ब्याकुल भयउँ बहोरि ॥ ७९ (ख) ॥

I flew up to Brahmā's abode; but when I looked back in my flight, two fingers' breadth, dear Garuḍa, was all the distance between Śrī Rāma's arm and myself. Penetrating the seven folds of the universe (consisting of earth, water, fire, air, ether, the cosmic ego and the cosmic intellect) I mounted to the utmost height I could reach. But there too I saw the Lord's arm; then I felt alarmed. (79 A-B)

चौ०—मूदेउँ नयन त्रसित जब भयऊँ । पुनि चितवत कोसलपुर गयऊँ ॥
मोहि बिलोकि राम मुसुकाहीं । बिहँसत तुरत गयउँ मुख माहीं ॥ १ ॥
उदर माझ सुनु अंडज राया । देखेउँ बहु ब्रह्मांड निकाया ॥
अति बिचित्र तहँ लोक अनेका । रचना अधिक एक ते एका ॥ २ ॥
कोटिन्ह चतुरानन गौरीसा । अगनित उडगन रबि रजनीसा ॥
अगनित लोकपाल जम काला । अगनित भूधर भूमि बिसाला ॥ ३ ॥
सागर सरि सर बिपिन अपारा । नाना भाँति सृष्टि बिस्तारा ॥
सुर मुनि सिद्ध नाग नर किंनर । चारि प्रकार जीव सचराचर ॥ ४ ॥

In my terror I closed my eyes; and when I opened them again I found myself at Kosalapura (Ayodhyā). Śrī Rāma smiled to see me back; and even as He laughed I was instantly driven into His mouth (throat). Listen, king of the birds: inside His belly I beheld multitudinous universes with many strange spheres each more wonderful than the rest, with myriads of Brahmās and Śivas, countless stars, suns and moons, numberless Lokapālas (guardians of spheres), Yamas (gods of punishment) and Kālas (gods of death), innumerable mountains and vast terrestrial globes, oceans, rivers, lakes and forests without end and manifold other varieties of creation, with gods and sages, the Siddhas, Nāgas, human beings and Kinnaras and the four classes of living beings, both moving and motionless. (1—4)

दो०—जो नहिं देखा नहिं सुना जो मनहूँ न समाइ ।
सो सब अद्भुत देखेउँ बरनि कवनि बिधि जाइ ॥ ८० (क) ॥
एक एक ब्रह्मांड महुँ रहउँ बरष सत एक ।
एहि बिधि देखत फिरउँ मैं अंड कटाह अनेक ॥ ८० (ख) ॥

I saw there all such marvels as I had never seen or heard of before and such as could not be conceived even by the mind; how, then, can I describe them? I stayed a full hundred years in each of those universes and in this manner I went round and beheld multitudinous universes having the shape of an egg. (80 A-B)

चौ०—लोक लोक प्रति भिन्न बिधाता । भिन्न बिष्नु सिव मनु दिसित्राता ॥
नर गंधर्ब भूत बेताला । किंनर निसिचर पसु खग ब्याला ॥ १ ॥
देव दनुज गन नाना जाती । सकल जीव तहँ आनहि भाँती ॥
महि सरि सागर सर गिरि नाना । सब प्रपंच तहँ आनइ आना ॥ २ ॥
अंडकोस प्रति प्रति निज रूपा । देखेउँ जिनस अनेक अनूपा ॥
अवधपुरी प्रति भुवन निनारी । सरजू भिन्न भिन्न नर नारी ॥ ३ ॥
दसरथ कौसल्या सुनु ताता । बिबिध रूप भरतादिक भ्राता ॥
प्रति ब्रह्मांड राम अवतारा । देखउँ बालबिनोद अपारा ॥ ४ ॥

Each universe had its own Brahmā (Creator), its own Viṣṇu (Preserver), Śiva (Destroyer), Manu (lord of creation presiding over a single Manvantara, consisting of a little more than 74 rounds of the four Yugas), regents of the quarters, human beings, Gandharvas (celestial musicians), spectres and goblins, Kinnaras (another class of heavenly musicians having a human figure with the head of a horse), Rākṣasas (giants), quadrupeds, birds, serpents, gods and demons of all classes, all the creatures having a shape peculiar to that universe. The earth with its multitudinous rivers, oceans, lakes and mountains, nay, the entire creation in each universe had a distinctive character. In all these universes I found myself possessed of manifold incomparable forms. Each universe had its own Ayodhyā with its own Sarayū and its own men and women. And listen, dear Garuḍa: Śrī Rāma's parents—Daśaratha and Kausalyā—as well as Śrī Rāma's brothers, Bharata and others, were all different in each universe. In each such universe I witnessed the descent of Śrī Rāma as well as the infinite variety of His childish sports. (1–4)

दो०—भिन्न भिन्न मैं दीख सबु अति बिचित्र हरिजान ।
अगनित भुवन फिरेउँ प्रभु राम न देखेउँ आन ॥ ८१ (क) ॥
सोइ सिसुपन सोइ सोभा सोइ कृपाल रघुबीर ।
भुवन भुवन देखत फिरउँ प्रेरित मोह समीर ॥ ८१ (ख) ॥

Everything I saw had a distinctive stamp of its own universe and was exceedingly wonderful too, O mount of Śrī Hari. But in my round of the innumerable universes I saw no other Rāma, my lord. Tossed by the blast of infatuation I saw, in each successive world that I visited, the same child-like ways, the same beauty, the same gracious Rāma (Hero of Raghu's line). (81 A-B)

चौ०—भ्रमत मोहि ब्रह्मांड अनेका । बीते मनहुँ कल्प सत एका ॥
फिरत फिरत निज आश्रम आयउँ । तहँ पुनि रहि कछु काल गवाँयउँ ॥ १ ॥
निज प्रभु जन्म अवध सुनि पायउँ । निर्भर प्रेम हरषि उठि धायउँ ॥
देखउँ जन्म महोत्सव जाई । जेहि बिधि प्रथम कहा मैं गाई ॥ २ ॥
राम उदर देखेउँ जग नाना । देखत बनइ न जाइ बखाना ॥
तहँ पुनि देखेउँ राम सुजाना । माया पति कृपाल भगवाना ॥ ३ ॥
करउँ बिचार बहोरि बहोरी । मोह कलिल ब्यापित मति मोरी ॥
उभय घरी महँ मैं सब देखा । भयउँ भ्रमित मन मोह बिसेषा ॥ ४ ॥

It seemed as if a hundred cycles had been spent in my wanderings through the many universes. At last after all my travels I came to my own hermitage and stayed there for some time. Meanwhile as I happened to hear of my lord's birth at Ayodhyā I started up and ran in an overwhelming ecstasy of love and went and witnessed the grand festival of His birth as I have already told you at length. (It need hardly be said that all this happened inside the belly of my lord.) Thus in the belly of Śrī Rāma I beheld a number of universes. But what I saw could only be seen with one's eyes: it was beyond all telling. There again I beheld the divine Śrī Rāma, the gracious and all-wise Lord of Māyā. I pondered again and again. But my understanding was obscured by the mists of delusion. In less than an hour I had seen everything. My soul being utterly bewildered, I was lost in a maze. (1–4)

दो०--देखि कृपाल बिकल मोहि बिहँसे तब रघुबीर।
बिहँसतहीं मुख बाहेर आयउँ सुनु मतिधीर ॥ ८२ (क) ॥
सोइ लरिकाई मो सन करन लगे पुनि राम।
कोटि भाँति समुझावउँ मनु न लहइ बिश्राम ॥ ८२ (ख) ॥

Seeing my distress the gracious Hero of Raghu's line laughed; and mark me, O Garuḍa of resolute mind: the moment He laughed I came out of His mouth. Śrī Rāma again began the same childish pranks with me. I reasoned with myself in every way I could; but my mind knew no peace. (82 A-B)

चौ०—देखि चरित यह सो प्रभुताई। समुझत देह दसा बिसराई ॥
धरनि परेउँ मुख आव न बाता। त्राहि त्राहि आरत जन त्राता ॥ १ ॥
प्रेमाकुल प्रभु मोहि बिलोकी। निज माया प्रभुता तब रोकी ॥
कर सरोज प्रभु मम सिर धरेऊ। दीनदयाल सकल दुख हरेऊ ॥ २ ॥
कीन्ह राम मोहि बिगत बिमोहा। सेवक सुखद कृपा संदोहा ॥
प्रभुता प्रथम बिचारि बिचारी। मन महँ होइ हरष अति भारी ॥ ३ ॥
भगत बछलता प्रभु कै देखी। उपजी मम उर प्रीति बिसेषी ॥
सजल नयन पुलकित कर जोरी। कीन्हिउँ बहु बिधि बिनय बहोरी ॥ ४ ॥

Seeing this childish play and recalling that glory (which I had seen inside the Lord's belly) I lost consciousness of my body, and crying: "Save me, save me, O Protector of the devotees in distress!" dropped to the ground. No other word came to my mouth. When the Lord saw me overpowered with love, He immediately checked the power of His Māyā. The Lord, who is so merciful to the afflicted, placed His lotus hand on my head and relieved me of all sorrows. The gracious Śrī Rāma, the delight of His servants, rid me of my deep-rooted error. As I reflected on His former glory my mind was flooded with joy. Seeing the Lord's loving kindness to His devotees my heart began to throb with profuse love. With eyes full of tears and joined palms and every hair on my body standing erect, I then made supplication to Him in many ways. (1–4)

दो०—सुनि सप्रेम मम बानी देखि दीन निज दास ।
बचन सुखद गंभीर मृदु बोले रमानिवास ॥ ८३ (क) ॥
काकभसुंडि मागु बर अति प्रसन्न मोहि जानि ।
अनिमादिक सिधि अपर रिधि मोच्छ सकल सुख खानि ॥ ८३ (ख) ॥

Hearing my loving words and seeing the wretched plight of His servant, Śrī Rāma (the Abode of Lakṣmī) spoke in words which were not only soft and pleasing but profound at the same time; "Kākabhuśuṇḍi ! ask of Me a boon, knowing Me to be highly pleased with you. Be it mystic powers such as Animā (the power of assuming a form as small as an atom), fabulous wealth (such as that possessed by Kubera, the god of riches) and final beatitude, which is the fountain of all joy,— (83 A-B.)

चौ०—ग्यान बिबेक बिरति बिग्याना । मुनि दुर्लभ गुन जे जग नाना ॥
आजु देउँ सब संसय नाहीं । मागु जो तोहि भाव मन माहीं ॥ १ ॥
सुनि प्रभु बचन अधिक अनुरागेउँ । मन अनुमान करन तब लागेउँ ॥
प्रभु कह देन सकल सुख सही । भगति आपनी देन न कही ॥ २ ॥
भगति हीन गुन सब सुख ऐसे । लवन बिना बहु बिंजन जैसे ॥
भजन हीन सुख कवने काजा । अस बिचारि बोलेउँ खगराजा ॥ ३ ॥
जौं प्रभु होइ प्रसन्न बर देहू । मो पर करहु कृपा अरु नेहू ॥
मन भावत बर मागउँ स्वामी । तुम्ह उदार उर अंतरजामी ॥ ४ ॥

—Or spiritual wisdom, critical judgment, dispassion. Realization and numerous other virtues which cannot be easily attained in this world even by the sages—today I am prepared to give you all undoubtedly; therefore, ask whatever pleases your mind." On hearing the words of the Lord I was overwhelmed with love and began to reason thus within myself: "The Lord, it is true, has promised to give me all kinds of blessings; but He did not offer to grant me devotion to His own feet. Without such devotion all sorts of virtues and blessings are like so many auxiliary dishes without salt. Of what avail is any blessing without adoration." Pondering thus, O king of the birds, I replied as follows: "If it is Your pleasure, my lord, to grant me a boon and if You are kind and affectionate to me, I ask my cherished boon, O master; for You are generous and know the secrets of all hearts. (1—4)

दो०—अबिरल भगति बिसुद्ध तव श्रुति पुरान जो गाव ।
जेहि खोजत जोगीस मुनि प्रभु प्रसाद कोउ पाव ॥ ८४ (क) ॥
भगत कल्पतरु प्रनत हित कृपा सिंधु सुख धाम ।
सोइ निज भगति मोहि प्रभु देहु दया करि राम ॥ ८४ (ख) ॥

"O my lord. Śrī Rama, tree of paradise to the devotee, friend of the suppliant, ocean of compassion and abode of bliss, in Your mercy grant me that devotion to Your feet, uninterrupted and unalloyed, which the Vedas and

Purānas extol, which is sought after by sages and great Yogis (contemplative mystics) but attained by few and that too by the Lord's grace." (84 A-B)

चौ०—एवमस्तु कहि रघुकुलनायक । बोले बचन परम सुखदायक ॥
सुनु बायस तैं सहज सयाना । काहे न मागसि अस बरदाना ॥ १ ॥
सब सुख खानि भगति तैं मागी । नहिं जग कोउ तोहि सम बड़भागी ॥
जो मुनि कोटि जतन नहिं लहहीं । जे जप जोग अनल तन दहहीं ॥ २ ॥
रीझेउँ देखि तोरि चतुराई । मागेहु भगति मोहि अति भाई ॥
सुनु बिहंग प्रसाद अब मोरें । सब सुभ गुन बसिहहिं उर तोरें ॥ ३ ॥
भगति ग्यान बिग्यान बिरागा । जोग चरित्र रहस्य बिभागा ॥
जानब तैं सबही कर भेदा । मम प्रसाद नहिं साधन खेदा ॥ ४ ॥

"So be it!" said the Chief of Raghu's line, and continued in these most pleasing terms: "Listen, Kākabhuśuṇḍi: you are sagacious by nature; no wonder, therefore, that you ask this boon. No one in this world is so highly blessed as you, since you have sought the gift of Devotion, which is the fountain of all blessings and which even sages cannot attain in spite of all their efforts, even though they consume their body in the fire of prayer and meditation. I am pleased to see your sagacity in that you have sought Devotion, which is extremely dear to My heart. Listen, O bird: by My grace now all good qualities shall abide in your heart. Devotion, spiritual wisdom, Realization, dispassion, Yoga, My exploits as well as their secrets and classification—by My grace you shall obtain insight into all these and shall not be required to undergo the rigours of Sādhana (self-discipline). (1—4)

दो०—माया संभव भ्रम सब अब न ब्यापिहहिं तोहि ।
जानेसु ब्रह्म अनादि अज अगुन गुनाकर मोहि ॥ ८५ (क) ॥
मोहि भगत प्रिय संतत अस बिचारि सुनु काग ।
कायँ बचन मन मम पद करेसु अचल अनुराग ॥ ८५ (ख) ॥

"None of the errors that arise from Māyā shall cloud your mind any more. Henceforth know Me to be the same as Brahma, who is without beginning, birthless, devoid of attributes (the products of Māyā) and yet a mine of (transcendent divine) virtues. Listen, Kākabhuśuṇḍi: devotees are always dear to Me. Realizing this, cherish unflinching devotion to My feet in thought, word and deed. (85 A-B)

चौ०—अब सुनु परम बिमल मम बानी । सत्य सुगम निगमादि बखानी ॥
निज सिद्धांत सुनावउँ तोही । सुनु मन धरु सब तजि भजु मोही ॥ १ ॥
मम माया संभव संसारा । जीव चराचर बिबिधि प्रकारा ॥
सब मम प्रिय सब मम उपजाए । सब ते अधिक मनुज मोहि भाए ॥ २ ॥
तिन्ह महँ द्विज द्विज महँ श्रुतिधारी । तिन्ह महुँ निगम धरम अनुसारी ॥
तिन्ह महँ प्रिय बिरक्त पुनि ग्यानी । ग्यानिहु ते अति प्रिय बिग्यानी ॥ ३ ॥

तिन्ह ते पुनि मोहि प्रिय निज दासा । जेहि गति मोरि न दूसरि आसा ॥
पुनि पुनि सत्य कहउँ तोहि पाहीं । मोहि सेवक सम प्रिय कोउ नाहीं ॥ ४ ॥
भगति हीन बिरंचि किन होई । सब जीवहु सम प्रिय मोहि सोई ॥
भगतिवंत अति नीचउ प्रानी । मोहि प्रानप्रिय असि मम बानी ॥ ५ ॥

"Now listen to My most sacred teaching, which is not only true and easily intelligible but has also been echoed by the Vedas and other scriptures. I give you to hear My own conclusion; listen to it and imprint it on your mind; and forswearing everything else, worship Me. This world with all its varieties of life, both moving and motionless, is a creation of My Māyā (delusive potency). I love them all, because all are My creatures. But human beings are the dearest to Me of all. Of human beings, the Brahmans; of the Brahmans, those well-versed in the Vedas; of these, again, those that follow the course of conduct prescribed in the Vedas; of these latter, those who are averse to the pleasure of sense are dear to Me, and yet more the wise; of the wise too I love a man of realization all the more; more beloved to Me even than these is my own servant (devotee), who solely depends on Me and has no other hope. Again and again I repeat to you the truth that no one is so dear to Me as My devotee. If Virañchi (the Creator) too had no devotion to Me, he would be only as dear to Me as all the other creatures. And the humblest creature that breathes, if possessed of Devotion, is dear to Me as life: such is My nature. (1—5)

दो०—सुचि सुसील सेवक सुमति प्रिय कहु काहि न लाग ।
श्रुति पुरान कह नीति असि सावधान सुनु काग ॥ ८६ ॥

"Tell Me, who would not love a faithful, amiable and sagacious servant? Listen attentively, O Kākabhuśuṇḍi: the Vedas and Purāṇas declare this to be a sound principle:— (86)

चौ०—एक पिता के बिपुल कुमारा । होहिं पृथक गुन सील अचारा ॥
कोउ पंडित कोउ तापस ग्याता । कोउ धनवंत सूर कोउ दाता ॥ १ ॥
कोउ सर्बग्य धर्मरत कोई । सब पर पितहि प्रीति सम होई ॥
कोउ पितु भगत बचन मन कर्मा । सपनेहुँ जान न दूसर धर्मा ॥ २ ॥
सो सुत प्रिय पितु प्रान समाना । जद्यपि सो सब भाँति अयाना ॥
एहि बिधि जीव चराचर जेते । त्रिजग देव नर असुर समेते ॥ ३ ॥
अखिल बिस्व यह मोर उपाया । सब पर मोहि बराबरि दाया ॥
तिन्ह महँ जो परिहरि मद माया । भजै मोहि मन बच अरु काया ॥ ४ ॥

"A father has a number of sons, each differing from the others in character, temper and conduct. One is learned, another given to austerities, a third spiritually enlightened, a fourth rich, a fifth possessed of valour, a sixth charitably disposed, a seventh all-wise and an eighth intent on piety; but the father equally loves all. A ninth son is devoted to his father in thought, word and deed and never dreams of any other duty. This is the son whom the father loves as his own life, though he be a perfect ignoramus. In a like

manner all animate and inanimate beings, including the sub-human species, gods, men and demons,—in short, the whole of this universe is My creation and I am equally compassionate to all. Of these, however, he who adores Me in thought, word and deed, forswearing arrogance and wiles,— (1–4)

दो०—पुरुष नपुंसक नारि वा जीव चराचर कोइ।
सर्ब भाव भज कपट तजि मोहि परम प्रिय सोइ॥ ८७ (क)॥
सो०—सत्य कहउँ खग तोहि सुचि सेवक मम प्रानप्रिय।
अस बिचारि भजु मोहि परिहरि आस भरोस सब॥ ८७ (ख)॥

"Be it man, woman or one lacking the characteristics of both, or, for the matter of that, any living being whatsoever of the animate or inanimate world—he who adores Me with all his being, giving up all guile, is supremely dear to Me. O bird, I tell you in all sincerity that a guileless servant is dear to Me as life. Realizing this worship Me, abandoning all other hope and reliance. (87 A-B)

चौ०—कबहूँ काल न ब्यापिहि तोही। सुमिरेसु भजेसु निरंतर मोही॥
प्रभु बचनामृत सुनि न अघाऊँ। तनु पुलकित मन अति हरषाऊँ॥ १॥
सो सुख जानइ मन अरु काना। नहिं रसना पहिं जाइ बखाना॥
प्रभु सोभा सुख जानहिं नयना। कहि किमि सकहिं तिन्हहि नहिं बयना॥ २॥
बहु बिधि मोहि प्रबोधि सुख देई। लगे करन सिसु कौतुक तेई॥
सजल नयन कछु मुख करि रूखा। चितइ मातु लागी अति भूखा॥ ३॥
देखि मातु आतुर उठि धाई। कहि मृदु बचन लिए उर लाई॥
गोद राखि कराव पय पाना। रघुपति चरित ललित कर गाना॥ ४॥

"Time shall have no power over you. Remember and adore Me unceasingly." I did not feel sated with hearing the nectar-like words of the Lord; the hair on my body stood erect and I felt extremely delighted at heart. The joy I felt on the occasion was shared only by the mind and the ears (the auditory sense); the tongue had no power to tell it. The eyes alone had the blissful experience of beholding the Lord's beauty; but how could they describe it, devoid of speech as they are? After He had gladdened me by His manifold exhortations in this way He again began to sport like a child as before. With tears in His eyes and His looks somewhat gloomy He looked at His mother (Kausalyā) as if He were hungry. Seeing this the mother started up in haste and ran; and addressing Him in soft words clasped Him to her bosom. Then, laying Him in her lap she began to suckle Him, singing the while of Śrī Rāma's charming exploits. (1–4)

सो०—जेहि सुख लागि पुरारि असुभ बेष कृत सिव सुखद।
अवधपुरी नर नारि तेहि सुख महुँ संतत मगन॥ ८८ (क)॥
सोई सुख लवलेस जिन्ह बारक सपनेहुँ लहेउ।
ते नहिं गनहिं खगेस ब्रह्मसुखहि सज्जन सुमति॥ ८८ (ख)॥

The men and women of Ayodhyā remained ever absorbed in that (transcendental) joy, to attain which the blessed Lord Śiva, the delighter of all, assumed His unsightly garb (such as a garland of human skulls, serpents for His ornaments, ashes for scented cosmetics and a tiger-skin for a loin-cloth). Those wise and virtuous souls who have tasted of that joy only once even in a dream think nothing of the joy of absorption into Brahma (much less of any other earthly or heavenly joy). (88 A-B)

चौ०—मैं पुनि अवध रहेउँ कछु काला । देखेउँ बालबिनोद रसाला ॥
राम प्रसाद भगति बर पायउँ । प्रभु पद बंदि निजाश्रम आयउँ ॥ १ ॥
तब ते मोहि न ब्यापी माया । जब ते रघुनायक अपनाया ॥
यह सब गुप्त चरित मैं गावा । हरि मायाँ जिमि मोहि नचावा ॥ २ ॥
निज अनुभव अब कहउँ खगेसा । बिनु हरि भजन न जाहिं कलेसा ॥
राम कृपा बिनु सुनु खगराई । जानि न जाइ राम प्रभुताई ॥ ३ ॥
जानें बिनु न होइ परतीती । बिनु परतीति होइ नहिं प्रीती ॥
प्रीति बिना नहिं भगति दिढ़ाई । जिमि खगपति जल कै चिकनाई ॥ ४ ॥

After this I stayed a while at Ayodhyā and enjoyed the Lord's delightful childish sports. Having by Śrī Rāma's grace obtained the boon of Devotion I adored my Lord's feet and returned to my own hermitage. Ever since the Lord accepted me as his own I have never fallen a victim to delusion. I have told you at length all this strange story of how Śrī Hari's Māyā made a puppet of me. Now I tell you my own realization, O lord of the winged creatures: unless we adore Śrī Hari our troubles will not end. Listen, king of the birds: without Śrī Rāma's grace it is not possible to know the Lord's greatness. Without knowledge faith is out of the question; and without faith there can be no love. Shorn of love, devotion will not abide any more than the lubricity produced by water. (1—4)

सो०—बिनु गुर होइ कि ग्यान ग्यान कि होइ बिराग बिनु ।
गावहिं बेद पुरान सुख कि लहिअ हरि भगति बिनु ॥ ८९ (क) ॥
कोउ बिश्राम कि पाव तात सहज संतोष बिनु ।
चलै कि जल बिनु नाव कोटि जतन पचि पचि मरिअ ॥ ८९ (ख) ॥

Is spiritual illumination possible without a preceptor? Or, again, is it possible to acquire wisdom without dispassion? Or, as the Vedas and Purāṇas declare, can one attain happiness without devotion to Śrī Hari? Again, dear Garuḍa, can one find peace without innate content? Can a boat ever float without water even though you strain every nerve till your last breath? (89 A-B.)

चौ०—बिनु संतोष न काम नसाहीं । काम अछत सुख सपनेहुँ नाहीं ॥
राम भजन बिनु मिटहिं कि कामा । थल बिहीन तरु कबहुँ कि जामा ॥ १ ॥
बिनु बिग्यान कि समता आवइ । कोउ अवकास कि नभ बिनु पावइ ॥
श्रद्धा बिना धर्म नहिं होई । बिनु महि गंध कि पावइ कोई ॥ २ ॥

बिनु तप तेज कि कर बिस्तारा । जल बिनु रस कि होइ संसारा ॥
सील कि मिल बिनु बुध सेवकाई । जिमि बिनु तेज न रूप गोसाँई ॥ ३ ॥
निज सुख बिनु मन होइ कि थीरा । परस कि होइ बिहीन समीरा ॥
कवनिउ सिद्धि कि बिनु बिस्वासा । बिनु हरि भजन न भव भय नासा ॥ ४ ॥

Without content desire cannot cease; and so long as desire continues you can never dream of happiness. Again, can desire be got rid of without adoring Śrī Rāma? Can a tree ever take root without soil? Can even-mindedness be acquired without spiritual enlightenment? Can anyone get moving space without ether? There can be no piety without faith. Can anyone get odour except from the earth and spread one's glory except through austere penance? Can there be any taste in this world without water? Can virtue be acquired without waiting upon the wise, any more than colour can exist without the element of fire, my master? Can the mind be at rest without experiencing the joy inherent in one's own self? Can there be any sensation of touch without air, and any success without faith? In a like manner the fear of rebirth can never cease except through worship of Śrī Hari. (1–4)

दो०—बिनु बिस्वास भगति नहिं तेहि बिनु द्रवहिं न रामु ।
राम कृपा बिनु सपनेहुँ जीव न लह बिश्रामु ॥ ९० (क) ॥
सो०—अस बिचारि मतिधीर तजि कुतर्क संसय सकल ।
भजहु राम रघुबीर करुनाकर सुंदर सुखद ॥ ९० (ख) ॥

Without faith there can be no Devotion and Śrī Rāma never melts except through Devotion; and without Śrī Rāma's grace the human soul can never attain peace even in a dream. Pondering thus, O Garuḍa of resolute mind, abandon all cavilling and scepticism and adore the all beautiful Śrī Rāma, the Hero of Raghu's line, a fountain of mercy and the delight of all. (90 A-B)

चौ०—निज मति सरिस नाथ मैं गाई । प्रभु प्रताप महिमा खगराई ॥
कहेउँ न कछु करि जुगुति बिसेषी । यह सब मैं निज नयनन्हि देखी ॥ १ ॥
महिमा नाम रूप गुन गाथा । सकल अमित अनंत रघुनाथा ॥
निज निज मति मुनि हरि गुन गावहिं । निगम सेष सिव पार न पावहिं ॥ २ ॥
तुम्हहि आदि खग मसक प्रजंता । नभ उड़ाहिं नहिं पावहिं अंता ॥
तिमि रघुपति महिमा अवगाहा । तात कबहुँ कोउ पाव कि थाहा ॥ ३ ॥
रामु काम सत कोटि सुभग तन । दुर्गा कोटि अमित अरि मर्दन ॥
सक्र कोटि सत सरिस बिलासा । नभ सत कोटि अमित अवकासा ॥ ४ ॥

Thus, my master, have I sung according to my own lights the greatness of my lord's glory, O king of the birds. I have not had recourse to any inventive skill; I have seen all this with my own eyes. Śrī Rāma's greatness, His Name, beauty and the songs of His praises, they are all boundless and endless; and the Lord of the Raghus Himself is infinite. The sages sing Śrī Hari's praises each according to his wits; but neither the Vedas nor

Śeṣa (the serpent god) nor the blessed Śiva Himself can reach their end. All winged creatures, from yourself down to the mosquito, take their flight across the sky; but none can reach the end of it. Even so, dear Garuḍa, can anyone ever gauge the extent of Śrī Rāma's greatness, unfathomable as it is ? Śrī Rāma's body possesses the charm of a myriad Cupids. He is as inexorable in crushing the enemy as countless millions of Durgās. He enjoys the luxury of a myriad Indras and is immeasurable in expanse as a myriad firmaments. (1—4)

दो०—मरुत कोटि सत बिपुल बल रबि सत कोटि प्रकास ।
ससि सत कोटि सुसीतल समन सकल भव त्रास ॥ ९१ (क) ॥
काल कोटि सत सरिस अति दुस्तर दुर्ग दुरंत ।
धूमकेतु सत कोटि सम दुराधरष भगवंत ॥ ९१ (ख) ॥

He has the might of a myriad winds and the brilliance of a myriad suns. He is as cool as a myriad moons and allays all the fears of mundane existence. Again, He is irresistible, unapproachable and interminable as a myriad Deaths. Nay, the Lord is irrepressible as a myriad fires. (91 A-B)

चौ०—प्रभु अगाध सत कोटि पताला । समन कोटि सत सरिस कराला ॥
तीरथ अमित कोटि सम पावन । नाम अखिल अघ पूग नसावन ॥ १ ॥
हिमगिरि कोटि अचल रघुबीरा । सिंधु कोटि सत सम गंभीरा ॥
कामधेनु सत कोटि समाना । सकल काम दायक भगवाना ॥ २ ॥
सारद कोटि अमित चतुराई । बिधि सत कोटि सृष्टि निपुनाई ॥
बिष्नु कोटि सम पालन कर्ता । रुद्र कोटि सत सम संहर्ता ॥ ३ ॥
धनद कोटि सत सम धनवाना । माया कोटि प्रपंच निधाना ॥
भार धरन सत कोटि अहीसा । निरवधि निरुपम प्रभु जगदीसा ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord is unfathomable as a myriad Pātālas and dreadful as a myriad Yamas. He is as sanctifying as countless millions of sacred places; nay, His very name obliterates all one's accumulated sins. The Hero of Raghu's line is as immovable as a myriad Himālayas and as deep as a myriad seas. The Lord is as liberal in bestowing all one's cherished objects as a myriad cows of plenty. He is as sharp as countless millions of Śāradās and possesses the creative skill of a myriad Brahmās. Again, He is as good a preserver as a myriad Viṣṇus and as thorough a destroyer as a myriad Rudras. He is as rich as a myriad Kuberas and as capable of bringing forth material universes as a myriad Māyās. He is as good a supporter (of the universes) as a myriad Śeṣas. In short, Lord Śrī Rāma, the sovereign of the universe, is infinite and incomparable (in every respect) (1—4)

छं०—निरुपम न उपमा आन राम समान रामु निगम कहै ।
जिमि कोटि सत खद्योत सम रबि कहत अति लघुता लहै ॥
एहि भाँति निज निज मति बिलास मुनीस हरिहि बखानहीं ।
प्रभु भाव गाहक अति कृपाल सप्रेम सुनि सुख मानहीं ॥

Incomparable as He is, He has no compeer. Śrī Rāma alone is Śrī Rāma's peer—so declare the Vedas—, even as the sun really suffers diminution by being likened to a myriad glow-worms. So do the great sages sing the praises of Śrī Hari each according to the flight of his own wits and the Lord lovingly hears them and feels delighted (however inadequate the praise may be); for He respects the sentiment of His devotees and is extremely kind.

दो०—रामु अमित गुन सागर थाह कि पावइ कोइ।
संतन्ह सन जस किछु सुनेउँ तुम्हहि सुनायउँ सोइ॥ ९२ (क)॥
सो०—भाव बस्य भगवान सुख निधान करुना भवन।
तजि ममता मद मान भजिअ सदा सीता रवन॥ ९२ (ख)॥

Śrī Rāma is an ocean of countless virtues: can anyone sound His depth? I have only told you the little I have myself heard from the saints. The Lord is won only by sincere Devotion and is a fountain of joy and an abode of compassion. Therefore, giving up worldly attachment, vanity and pride, one should ever adore Sītā's Spouse. (92 A-B)

चौ०—सुनि भुसुंडि के बचन सुहाए। हरषित खगपति पंख फुलाए॥
नयन नीर मन अति हरषाना। श्रीरघुपति प्रताप उर आना॥ १॥
पाछिल मोह समुझि पछिताना। ब्रह्म अनादि मनुज करि माना॥
पुनि पुनि काग चरन सिरु नावा। जानि राम सम प्रेम बढ़ावा॥ २॥
गुर बिनु भव निधि तरइ न कोई। जौं बिरंचि संकर सम होई॥
संसय सर्प ग्रसेउ मोहि ताता। दुखद लहरि कुतर्क बहु ब्राता॥ ३॥
तव सरूप गारुड़ि रघुनायक। मोहि जिआयउ जन सुखदायक॥
तव प्रसाद मम मोह नसाना। राम रहस्य अनूपम जाना॥ ४॥

The lord of the winged creatures was rejoiced to hear the agreeable words of Bhuśuṇḍi and fluffed up his feathers. Tears rushed to his eyes and his soul was flooded with joy as he meditated on the glory of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). Recalling his former delusion he was filled with remorse at the thought that He had taken the dateless Brahma for a mere mortal. Again and again he bowed his head at the crow's feet and loved him all the more, knowing him to be as good as Rāma. Without a spiritual guide none can cross the ocean of mundane existence, though he be the equal of Virañchi (the Creator) or Lord Śankara. He said, "I was bitten by the serpent of doubt, dear father. (As an effect of this snake-bite) I had several painful fits of stupor in the form of so many fallacies. But the Lord of the Raghus, the delight of His devotees, has saved me by sending me to a charmer in your person. By your grace my infatuation has ceased and I have learnt the incomparable mystery of Śrī Rāma." (1-4)

दो०—ताहि प्रसंसि बिबिधि बिधि सीस नाइ कर जोरि।
बचन बिनीत सप्रेम मृदु बोलेउ गरुड़ बहोरि॥ ९३ (क)॥

प्रभु अपने अबिबेक ते बूझउँ स्वामी तोहि ।
कृपासिंधु सादर कहहु जानि दास निज मोहि ॥ ९३ (ख) ॥

After eulogizing Kākabhuśuṇḍi in many ways and bowing his head before him with joined palms Garuḍa proceeded in these polite, affectionate and gentle words: "In my ignorance, O my lord and master, I ask you a question. Knowing me to be your own servant, O ocean of compassion, carefully answer it. (93 A-B)

चौ०—तुम्ह सर्बग्य तग्य तम पारा । सुमति सुसील सरल आचारा ॥
ग्यान बिरति बिग्यान निवासा । रघुनायक के तुम्ह प्रिय दासा ॥ १ ॥
कारन कवन देह यह पाई । तात सकल मोहि कहहु बुझाई ॥
राम चरित सर सुंदर स्वामी । पायहु कहाँ कहहु नभगामी ॥ २ ॥
नाथ सुना मैं अस सिव पाहीं । महा प्रलयहुँ नास तव नाहीं ॥
मुधा बचन नहिं ईस्वर कहई । सोउ मोरें मन संसय अहई ॥ ३ ॥
अग जग जीव नाग नर देवा । नाथ सकल जगु काल कलेवा ॥
अंड कटाह अमित लय कारी । कालु सदा दुरतिक्रम भारी ॥ ४ ॥

"You are an omniscient knower of Truth, having reached beyond the darkness (of ignorance), intelligent, amiable, straight in your dealings and a storehouse of wisdom, dispassion and Realization. Above all you are a beloved servant of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). Yet wherefore did you get this form (of a crow)? Dear father, explain all this to me clearly. Also tell me, my master, where did you get this lovely Lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, O good bird? My lord I have heard it from Śiva Himself that you do not perish even during Mahāpralaya (the Great Dissolution when Brahmā himself retires into the Lord's body after completing the 100 years of his existence). The divine Lord Śiva would never utter an idle word and therefore my mind is in doubt. My lord, the whole universe with all its animate and inanimate beings, including the Nāgas, human beings and gods, is an intended victim of Death. The Time-Spirit, which destroys countless universes, is ever mighty and irresistible. (1—4)

सो०—तुम्हहि न ब्यापत काल अति कराल कारन कवन ।
मोहि सो कहहु कृपाल ग्यान प्रभाव कि जोग बल ॥ ९४ (क) ॥
दो०—प्रभु तव आश्रम आएँ मोर मोह भ्रम भाग ।
कारन कवन सो नाथ सब कहहु सहित अनुराग ॥ ९४ (ख) ॥

"How is it that the most formidable Time-Spirit has no power over you? Tell me my gracious lord, if it is a glory of spiritual insight or a feat of Yoga (union with God)? O lord, my infatuation and delusion disappeared the moment I visited your hermitage. Tell me in a loving spirit, my lord, how did all this happen?" (94 A-B)

चौ०—गरुड़ गिरा सुनि हरषेउ कागा । बोलेउ उमा परम अनुरागा ॥
धन्य धन्य तव मति उरगारी । प्रस्न तुम्हारि मोहि अति प्यारी ॥ १ ॥

सुनि तव प्रस्न सप्रेम सुहाई। बहुत जनम के सुधि मोहि आई॥
सब निज कथा कहउँ मैं गाई। तात सुनहु सादर मन लाई॥ २॥
जप तप मख सम दम ब्रत दाना। बिरति बिबेक जोग बिग्याना॥
सब कर फल रघुपति पद प्रेमा। तेहि बिनु कोउ न पावइ छेमा॥ ३॥
एहिं तन राम भगति मैं पाई। ताते मोहि ममता अधिकाई॥
जेहि तें कछु निज स्वारथ होई। तेहि पर ममता कर सब कोई॥ ४॥

Umā, (continues Lord Śiva,) the crow (Kākabhuśuṇḍi) rejoiced to hear Garuḍa's words and replied with utmost affection: "Blessed, blessed indeed is your intellect, O enemy of serpents. Your question is very pleasing to me. On hearing your loving and agreeable question I have been reminded of many previous births. I shall now narrate the whole of my story at full length; dear Garuḍa, listen to it attentively with all reverence. The muttering of prayers, austere penance, performing sacrifices, subjugation of the mind and the senses, undertaking sacred vows, charity, dispassion, right judgment, Yoga (union with God) and Realization—the fruit of all these is devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus); without this no one can attain lasting peace. It was in this body that I was blessed with devotion to Śrī Rāma; hence it is so very dear to me. Everyone naturally loves that through which one has attained one's object.
(1–4)

सो०—पन्नगारि असि नीति श्रुति संमत सज्जन कहहिं।
अति नीचहु सन प्रीति करिअ जानि निज परम हित॥ ९५ (क)॥
पाट कीट तें होइ तेहि तें पाटंबर रुचिर।
कृमि पालइ सबु कोइ परम अपावन प्रान सम॥ ९५ (ख)॥

It is a sound maxim, O enemy of serpents, approved of by the Vedas,—and the saints too endorse it,—that love should be shown to the meanest creature if we come to know it to be our greatest friend. Silk, for instance, is the product of a worm and from it we have beautiful silken textiles. That is why everyone tends the worm like one's own life even though it is most impure. (95 A B)

चौ०—स्वारथ साँच जीव कहुँ एहा। मन क्रम बचन राम पद नेहा॥
सोइ पावन सोइ सुभग सरीरा। जो तनु पाइ भजिअ रघुबीरा॥ १॥
राम बिमुख लहि बिधि सम देही। कबि कोबिद न प्रसंसहिं तेही॥
राम भगति एहिं तन उर जामी। ताते मोहि परम प्रिय स्वामी॥ २॥
तजउँ न तन निज इच्छा मरना। तन बिनु बेद भजन नहिं बरना॥
प्रथम मोहँ मोहि बहुत बिगोवा। राम बिमुख सुख कबहुँ न सोवा॥ ३॥
नाना जनम कर्म पुनि नाना। किए जोग जप तप मख दाना॥
कवन जोनि जनमेउँ जहँ नाहीं। मैं खगेस भ्रमि भ्रमि जग माहीं॥ ४॥
देखेउँ करि सब करम गोसाईं। सुखी न भयउँ अबहिं की नाईं॥
सुधि मोहि नाथ जन्म बहु केरी। सिव प्रसाद मति मोहँ न घेरी॥ ५॥

The real self-interest of every living creature lies in cultivating devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet in thought, word and deed. That body alone is sacred and that alone blessed, in which one is able to worship the Hero of Raghu's line. The wise and the learned never extol him who is hostile to Śrī Rāma, even though he may acquire a body as exalted as that of Brahmā (the Creator) himself. Devotion to Śrī Rāma took root in my heart in this very body; hence I hold it supremely dear, my master. Although my death depends on my own will, I refuse to quit this body, because—as the Vedas declare—adoration of the Lord is not possible without a corporeal frame. At first infatuation gave me much trouble; so long as I remained hostile to Śrī Rāma I never had a restful sleep. Through a number births I practised Yoga (concentration of mind), Japa (muttering of prayers), austere penance and charity and performed sacrifices and other acts of various kinds. Which species is there in this world, O lord of the winged creatures, in which I have not at some time been born during my round of births ? I have had experience of all kinds of pursuits, my lord; but I was never so happy as I am now. I recollect many previous existences, my lord, in which by Śiva's grace my understanding was not clouded by infatuation.

(1—5)

दो०—प्रथम जन्म के चरित अब कहउँ सुनहु बिहगेस ।
सुनि प्रभु पद रति उपजइ जातें मिटहिं कलेस ॥ ९६ (क) ॥
पूरुब कल्प एक प्रभु जुग कलिजुग मल मूल ।
नर अरु नारि अधर्म रत सकल निगम प्रतिकूल ॥ ९६ (ख) ॥

Listen, O lord of the feathered kingdom: I now proceed to narrate the story of my very first birth (within my memory), which is sure to engender in the heart of the listener love for the Lord's feet, which is the remedy for all afflictions. In a former Kalpa (round of creation), my lord, the world was passing through a Kaliyuga, the hotbed of sin, in which men and women were all steeped in unrighteousness and acted contrary to the Vedas.

(96 A-B)

चौ०—तेहिं कलिजुग कोसलपुर जाई । जन्मत भयउँ सूद्र तनु पाई ॥
सिव सेवक मन क्रम अरु बानी । आन देव निंदक अभिमानी ॥ १ ॥
धन मद मत्त परम बाचाला । उग्रबुद्धि उर दंभ बिसाला ॥
जदपि रहेउँ रघुपति रजधानी । तदपि न कछु महिमा तब जानी ॥ २ ॥
अब जाना मैं अवध प्रभावा । निगमागम पुरान अस गावा ॥
कवनेहुँ जन्म अवध बस जोई । राम परायन सो परि होई ॥ ३ ॥
अवध प्रभाव जान तब प्रानी । जब उर बसहिं रामु धनुपानी ॥
सो कलिकाल कठिन उरगारी । पाप परायन सब नर नारी ॥ ४ ॥

In that Kaliyuga I was born in the city of Ayodhyā and got the body of a Śūdra (a member of the labouring and artisan classes). A devotee of Lord Śiva in thought, word and deed, I was a reviler of other gods and conceited too. Intoxicated with the pride of pelf, I was most loquacious and savage of purpose and carried an enormous load of hypocrisy in my heart. Even though I dwelt in the capital of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus),

I failed to know even an iota of its glory then. Now I have come to know the greatness of Ayodhyā. Thus has it been sung by the Vedas, Tantras and Purāṇas that whoever has resided in Ayodhyā in any birth whatsoever surely becomes a votary of Śrī Rāma. A man comes to know the glory of Ayodhyā only when Śrī Rāma, bow in hand, takes up His abode in his heart. That particular age of Kali was terrible indeed, O enemy of serpents: every man and woman was given over to sin. (1–4)

दो०—कलिमल ग्रसे धर्म सब लुप्त भए सदग्रंथ।
दंभिन्ह निज मति कल्पि करि प्रगट किए बहु पंथ ॥ ९७ (क) ॥
भए लोग सब मोहबस लोभ ग्रसे सुभ कर्म।
सुनु हरिजान ग्यान निधि कहउँ कछुक कलिधर्म ॥ ९७ (ख) ॥

Every virtue had been engulfed by the sins of Kali; all good books had disappeared; impostors had promulgated a number of creeds which they had invented out of their own wit. The people had all fallen a prey to delusion and all pious acts had been swallowed by greed. Now listen, all-wise mount of Śrī Hari, while I describe a few peculiarities of Kali. (97 A-B)

चौ०--बरन धर्म नहिं आश्रम चारी। श्रुति बिरोध रत सब नर नारी ॥
द्विज श्रुति बेचक भूप प्रजासन। कोउ नहिं मान निगम अनुसासन ॥ १ ॥
मारग सोइ जा कहुँ जोइ भावा। पंडित सोइ जो गाल बजावा ॥
मिथ्यारंभ दंभ रत जोई। ता कहुँ संत कहइ सब कोई ॥ २ ॥
सोइ सयान जो परधन हारी। जो कर दंभ सो बड़ आचारी ॥
जो कह झूँठ मसखरी जाना। कलिजुग सोइ गुनवंत बखाना ॥ ३ ॥
निराचार जो श्रुति पथ त्यागी। कलिजुग सोइ ग्यानी सो बिरागी ॥
जाकें नख अरु जटा बिसाला। सोइ तापस प्रसिद्ध कलिकाला ॥ ४ ॥

No one follows the duties of one's own caste, and the four Āśramas or stages of life also disappear. Every man and woman takes delight in revolting against the Vedas. The Brahmans sell the Vedas; the kings bleed their subjects; no one respects the injunctions of the Vedas. The right course for every individual is that which one takes a fancy to; a man of erudition is he who plays the braggart. Whoever launches spurious undertakings and is given over to hypocrisy, him does everyone call a saint. He alone is clever, who robs another of his wealth; he who puts up false appearances is an ardent follower of established usage. He who is given to lying and is clever at joking is spoken of as a man of parts in the Kali age. He alone who is a reprobate and has abandoned the path of the Vedas is a man of wisdom and dispassion in the Kali age. He alone who has grown big nails and long locks of matted hair is a renowned ascetic in the Kali age. (1–4)

दो०—असुभ बेष भूषन धरें भच्छाभच्छ जे खाहिं।
तेइ जोगी तेइ सिद्ध नर पूज्य ते कलिजुग माहिं ॥ ९८ (क) ॥

सो०--जे अपकारी चार तिन्ह कर गौरव मान्य तेइ ।
मन क्रम बचन लबार तेइ बकता कलिकाल महुँ ॥ ९८ (ख) ॥

They alone who put on an unsightly garb and ornaments, eat anything and everything, no matter whether it is worth eating or not, are ascetics; they alone are perfect men and they are worth adoring in the Kali age. They who are of maleficent conduct are held in great esteem and they alone are worthy of honour. Even so they alone who are babblers in thought, word and deed are orators in the Kali age. (98 A-B)

चौ०--नारि बिबस नर सकल गोसाईं । नाचहिं नट मर्कट की नाईं ॥
सूद्र द्विजन्ह उपदेसहिं ग्याना । मेलि जनेऊ लेहिं कुदाना ॥ १ ॥
सब नर काम लोभ रत क्रोधी । देव बिप्र श्रुति संत बिरोधी ॥
गुन मंदिर सुंदर पति त्यागी । भजहिं नारि पर पुरुष अभागी ॥ २ ॥
सौभागिनीं बिभूषन हीना । बिधवन्ह के सिंगार नबीना ॥
गुर सिष बधिर अंध का लेखा । एक न सुनइ एक नहिं देखा ॥ ३ ॥
हरइ सिष्य धन सोक न हरई । सो गुर घोर नरक महुँ परई ॥
मातु पिता बालकन्हि बोलावहिं । उदर भरै सोइ धर्म सिखावहिं ॥ ४ ॥

Dominated by women, my lord, all men dance to their tune like a monkey controlled by its trainer. Śūdras instruct the twice-born in spiritual wisdom and, wearing the sacred thread, accept the worst type of gifts. All men are given over to sensuality and greed and irascible too, and are hostile to the gods, the Brahmans, the Vedas as well as to the saints. Unfortunate wives desert their accomplished and handsome husband and bestow their heart on a paramour. Wives having their husband alive have no ornament on their person, while widows adorn themselves in the latest style. The disciple and the preceptor severally resemble a deaf man and a blind man: the one would not listen, while the other cannot see. A spiritual guide who robs his disciple of money but fails to rid him of his sorrow is cast into a terrible hell. Parents call their children and teach them such religion as may fill their belly. (1-4)

दो०--ब्रह्म ग्यान बिनु नारि नर कहहिं न दूसरि बात ।
कौड़ी लागि लोभ बस करहिं बिप्र गुर घात ॥ ९९ (क) ॥
बादहिं सूद्र द्विजन्ह सन हम तुम्ह ते कछु घाटि ।
जानइ ब्रह्म सो बिप्रबर आँखि देखावहिं डाटि ॥ ९९ (ख) ॥

Men and women talk of nothing else than the Knowledge of Brahma; while in their greed they would kill a Brahman or, for the matter of that, even their own spiritual guide for the sake of a single shell. Śūdras argue with the twice-born: "Are we in any way inferior to you? A good Brahman is he who knows the truth of Brahma!" and defiantly glower at them. (99 A-B)

चौ०—पर त्रिय लंपट कपट सयाने । मोह द्रोह ममता लपटाने ॥
तेइ अभेदबादी ग्यानी नर । देखा मैं चरित्र कलिजुग कर ॥ १ ॥
आपु गए अरु तिन्हहू घालहिं । जे कहुँ सत मारग प्रतिपालहिं ॥
कल्प कल्प भरि एक एक नरका । परहिं जे दूषहिं श्रुति करि तरका ॥ २ ॥
जे बरनाधम तेलि कुम्हारा । स्वपच किरात कोल कलवारा ॥
नारि मुई गृह संपति नासी । मूड़ मुड़ाइ होहिं संन्यासी ॥ ३ ॥
ते बिप्रन्ह सन आपु पुजावहिं । उभय लोक निज हाथ नसावहिं ॥
बिप्र निरच्छर लोलुप कामी । निराचार सठ बृषली स्वामी ॥ ४ ॥
सूद्र करहिं जप तप ब्रत नाना । बैठि बरासन कहहिं पुराना ॥
सब नर कल्पित करहिं अचारा । जाइ न बरनि अनीति अपारा ॥ ५ ॥

They alone who are covetous of another's wife and are clever at wiles and steeped in delusion, malice and worldly attachment are enlightened men swearing by the identity of the individual soul with Brahma. Such is the practice I have seen in every Kali age. Doomed themselves, such people bring ruin even to those rare souls who tread the path of virtue. They who find fault with the Vedas by dint of logic are condemned to each hell for a whole Kalpa (cycle). People of the lowest grade in society such as oilmen, potters, the outcaste (*lit.*, those who cook and feed on the flesh of a dog), the Kirātas and Kols and the distillers of spirituous liquors get their heads shaved and enter the order of Sannyāsa (renunciation) when their wife is no more in this world and they have lost their household property. They allow themselves to be worshipped by the Brahmans and bring ruin to themselves here as well as hereafter. As for the Brahmans, they are unlettered, grasping, lascivious, reprobate and stupid and marry low-caste women of a lewd character. Śūdras, on the other hand, practise Japa (the muttering of prayers) and austere penance, undertake sacred vows of various kinds and expound the Purāṇas from an exalted seat. All men follow a course of conduct of their own imagination; the endless variety of wrong-doing cannot be described in words. (1—5)

दो०—भए बरन संकर कलि भिन्नसेतु सब लोग ।
करहिं पाप पावहिं दुख भय रुज सोक बियोग ॥ १०० (क) ॥
श्रुति संमत हरि भक्ति पथ संजुत बिरति बिबेक ।
तेहिं न चलहिं नर मोह बस कल्पहिं पंथ अनेक ॥ १०० (ख) ॥

In the age of Kali there ensues a confusion of castes (due to promiscuous intermarriages) and every one infringes the sacred laws. Men perpetrate sins and reap suffering, terror, disease, sorrow and desolation. Overcome by delusion they walk not in the path of Devotion to Śrī Hari, conjoined with dispassion and wisdom,—a path which has the approval of the Vedas,—and invent diverse creeds of their own. (100 A-B)

छं०—बहु दाम सँवारहिं धाम जती । बिषया हरि लीन्हि न रहि बिरती ॥
तपसी धनवंत दरिद्र गृही । कलि कौतुक तात न जात कही ॥ १ ॥

कुलवंति निकारहिं नारि सती। गृह आनहिं चेरि निबेरि गती॥
सुत मानहिं मातु पिता तब लौं। अबलानन दीख नहीं जब लौं॥ २॥
ससुरारि पिआरि लगी जब तें। रिपुरूप कुटुंब भए तब तें॥
नृप पाप परायन धर्म नहीं। करि दंड बिडंब प्रजा नितहीं॥ ३॥
धनवंत कुलीन मलीन अपी। द्विज चिन्ह जनेउ उघार तपी॥
नहिं मान पुरान न बेदहि जो। हरि सेवक संत सही कलि सो॥ ४॥
कबि बृंद उदार दुनी न सुनी। गुन दूषक ब्रात न कोपि गुनी॥
कलि बारहिं बार दुकाल परै। बिनु अन्न दुखी सब लोग मरै॥ ५॥

The so-called recluses build themselves houses and furnish them at considerable expense; dispassion is no more to be seen in them, the same having been wiped out by their sensuality. The so-called ascetics grow wealthy and householders go penniless: the freaks of the Kali age, dear Garuḍa, are beyond all telling. Men drive out a well-born and virtuous wife and bring home some servant-girl, casting to the winds all good usage. Sons respect their father and mother only so long as they have not seen the face of their wife. From the time they take a fancy to their wife's kinsfolk they begin to look upon their own people as their enemies. Kings get addicted to sin and cease to have anything to do with piety. They ever persecute their subjects by inflicting unmerited punishment on them. The meanest churl, if he is rich, is accounted noble. A Brahman is known only by his sacred thread, and an ascetic by his naked body. He who refuses to recognize the Vedas and Purāṇas is a true saint and servant of Śrī Hari in the Kali age. Poets are seen in large numbers; but the munificent (who reward them) are seldom heard of. Those who find fault with others' virtues can be had in any number, but no one possessing virtues. In the Kali age famines are of frequest occurrence: for want of foodgrains people perish miserably *en masse*.

(1—5)

दो०—सुनु खगेस कलि कपट हठ दंभ द्वेष पाषंड।
मान मोह मारादि मद ब्यापि रहे ब्रह्मंड॥ १०१ (क)॥
तामस धर्म करहिं नर जप तप ब्रत मख दान।
देव न बरषहिं धरनीं बए न जामहिं धान॥ १०१ (ख)॥

Listen, lord of the winged creatures: in the age of Kali duplicity, perversity, hypocrisy, malice, heresy, pride, infatuation, concupiscence and arrogance etc. pervade the whole universe. Men practise Japa (the muttering of prayers), austere penance and charity, perform sacrifices and undertake sacred vows with some unholy motive. The gods rain not upon the earth and foodgrains sown in the soil do not germinate.

(101 A-B)

छं०—अबला कच भूषन भूरि छुधा। धनहीन दुखी ममता बहुधा॥
सुख चाहहिं मूढ़ न धर्म रता। मति थोरि कठोरि न कोमलता॥ १॥

नर पीड़ित रोग न भोग कहीं । अभिमान बिरोध अकारनहीं ॥
लघु जीवन संबतु पंच दसा । कलपांत न नास गुमानु असा ॥ २ ॥
कलिकाल बिहाल किए मनुजा । नहिं मानत क्वौ अनुजा तनुजा ॥
नहिं तोष बिचार न सीतलता । सब जाति कुजाति भए मगता ॥ ३ ॥
इरिषा परुषाच्छर लोलुपता । भरि पूरि रही समता बिगता ॥
सब लोग बियोग बिसोक हए । बरनाश्रम धर्म अचार गए ॥ ४ ॥
दम दान दया नहिं जानपनी । जड़ता परबंचनताति घनी ॥
तनु पोषक नारि नरा सगरे । परनिंदक जे जग मो बगरे ॥ ५ ॥

Women have no ornament except their tresses and have an enormous appetite. Though miserable for want of money, they are rich in attachment of various kinds. Though hankering after happiness they love not piety, stupid as they are. Though they are poor in wits, their mind is hardened and knows no tenderness. As for men, they are tormented with diseases and find no enjoyment anywhere. They are conceited and contend with others without any rhyme or reason. Men's life is short, extending to not more than five or ten years; yet in their pride they reckon on surviving the end of creation. The age of Kali has driven men mad: no one respects the sanctity even of one's sister or daughter. There is no contentment, nor discernment, nor composure People of all classes, whether high or low, have taken to begging. Envy, harsh words and covetousness are rampant; while evenness of mind is absent. People are all smitten with bereavement and deep sorrow. The duties and rules of conduct prescribed for the four orders of society and stages in life are neglected. Self-control, charity, compassion and wisdom disappear; while stupidity and fraud multiply to a large extent. Men and women all pamper their body; while slanderers are diffused all over the world. (1–5)

दो०—सुनु ब्यालारि काल कलि मल अवगुन आगार ।
गुनउ बहुत कलिजुग कर बिनु प्रयास निस्तार ॥ १०२ (क) ॥
कृतजुग त्रेताँ द्वापर पूजा मख अरु जोग ।
जो गति होइ सो कलि हरि नाम ते पावहिं लोग ॥ १०२ (ख) ॥

Listen, O enemy of serpents: the age of Kali is a store house of impurities and vices. But it has many virtues too: final emancipation is possible (in this age) without any exertion. Moreover, the same goal which is reached through worship of God, performance of sacrifices or practice of Yoga in the Satyayuga, Tretā and Dwāpara men are able to attain through the name of Śrī Hari in the Kali age. (102 A-B)

चौ०—कृतजुग सब जोगी बिग्यानी । करि हरि ध्यान तरहिं भव प्रानी ॥
त्रेताँ बिबिध जग्य नर करहीं । प्रभुहि समर्पि कर्म भव तरहीं ॥ १ ॥
द्वापर करि रघुपति पद पूजा । नर भव तरहिं उपाय न दूजा ॥
कलिजुग केवल हरि गुन गाहा । गावत नर पावहिं भव थाहा ॥ २ ॥

कलिजुग जोग न जग्य न ग्याना । एक अधार राम गुन गाना ॥
सब भरोस तजि जो भज रामहि । प्रेम समेत गाव गुन ग्रामहि ॥ ३ ॥
सोइ भव तर कछु संसय नाहीं । नाम प्रताप प्रगट कलि माहीं ॥
कलि कर एक पुनीत प्रतापा । मानस पुन्य होहिं नहिं पापा ॥ ४ ॥

In the Satyayuga everyone is possessed of mystic powers and wise too. Hence in that age men cross the ocean of mundane existence by meditating on Śrī Hari. In the Tretā age men perform sacrifices of various kinds and cross the ocean of metempsychosis by dedicating their actions to the Lord. In the Dwāpara age men cross the ocean of worldly existence by adoring the feet of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), there being no other means to do it. In the Kali age, however, men reach the end of mundane existence simply by singing Śrī Hari's praises. In the age of Kali neither Yoga (concentration of mind), nor the performance of sacrifices nor spiritual wisdom is of any avail; one's only hope lies in hymning Śrī Rāma's praises. Giving up all other hopes, whosoever worships Śrī Rāma and fondly chants His praises undoubtedly crosses the ocean of transmigration. The power of the Name is thus manifest in the age of Kali. The Kali age possesses another sacred virtue: in this age projected acts of virtue are rewarded, but projected sins are not punished. (1—4)

दो०—कलिजुग सम जुग आन नहिं जौं नर कर बिस्वास ।
गाइ राम गुन गन बिमल भव तर बिनहिं प्रयास ॥ १०३ (क) ॥
प्रगट चारि पद धर्म के कलि महुँ एक प्रधान ।
जेन केन बिधि दीन्हें दान करइ कल्यान ॥ १०३ (ख) ॥

No other age can compare with the Kali age provided a man has faith (in its virtue); for in this age one can easily cross the ocean of transmigration simply by singing Śrī Rāma's holy praises. Piety has four well-known pillars, of which one is predominant in the Kali: charity practised in any way conduces to one's spiritual good. (103 A-B)

चौ०—नित जुग धर्म होहिं सब केरे । हृदयँ राम माया के प्रेरे ॥
सुद्ध सत्व समता बिग्याना । कृत प्रभाव प्रसन्न मन जाना ॥ १ ॥
सत्व बहुत रज कछु रति कर्मा । सब बिधि सुख त्रेता कर धर्मा ॥
बहु रज स्वल्प सत्व कछु तामस । द्वापर धर्म हरष भय मानस ॥ २ ॥
तामस बहुत रजोगुन थोरा । कलि प्रभाव बिरोध चहुँ ओरा ॥
बुध जुग धर्म जानि मन माहीं । तजि अधर्म रति धर्म कराहीं ॥ ३ ॥
काल धर्म नहिं ब्यापहिं ताही । रघुपति चरन प्रीति अति जाही ॥
नट कृत बिकट कपट खगराया । नट सेवकहि न ब्यापइ माया ॥ ४ ॥

Prompted by Śrī Rāma's delusive potency, the characteristics of all the four Yugas manifest themselves in everyone's heart every day. The presence of pure Sattva (harmony), evenness of mind, spiritual insight and the feeling of vivacity in the heart are the effects of Satyayuga. Abundance of

Sattva with a slight admixture of Rajas, attachment to action, and happiness of every kind are the characteristics of Tretā. Much Rajas, little Sattva, and some Tamas, with a feeling of mingled joy and terror in the heart, are the distinguishing features of Dwāpara. A large proportion of Tamas with a slight admixture of Rajas and antagonism everywhere are the effects of Kali. The wise discern the characteristics of the different Yugas in their mind and forswearing unrighteousness devote themselves to piety. The characteristics of the Time-Spirit have no effect on him who is excessively fond of Śrī Rāma's feet. The deception practised by a juggler, O king of the birds, is formidable indeed; but the tricks of a juggler cannot deceive his servant. (1—4)

दो०—हरि माया कृत दोष गुन बिनु हरि भजन न जाहिं ।
भजिअ राम तजि काम सब अस बिचारि मन माहिं ॥ १०४ (क) ॥
तेहिं कलिकाल बरष बहु बसेउँ अवध बिहगेस ।
परेउ दुकाल बिपति बस तब मैं गयउँ बिदेस ॥ १०४ (ख) ॥

The good and evil, which are the creation of Śrī Hari's delusive potency, cannot be eliminated except through worship of Śrī Hari. Bearing this in mind, and forswearing all desire, one should adore Śrī Hari. In that particular age of Kali, O lord of the winged creatures, I lived in Ayodhyā for many years till a famine occurred, when, stricken by adversity, I had to move to another place. (104 A-B)

चौ०—गयउँ उजेनी सुनु उरगारी । दीन मलीन दरिद्र दुखारी ॥
गएँ काल कछु संपति पाई । तहँ पुनि करउँ संभु सेवकाई ॥ १ ॥
बिप्र एक बैदिक सिव पूजा । करइ सदा तेहि काजु न दूजा ॥
परम साधु परमारथ बिंदक । संभु उपासक नहिं हरि निंदक ॥ २ ॥
तेहि सेवउँ मैं कपट समेता । द्विज दयाल अति नीति निकेता ॥
बाहिज नम्र देखि मोहि साईं । बिप्र पढ़ाव पुत्र की नाईं ॥ ३ ॥
संभु मंत्र मोहि द्विजबर दीन्हा । सुभ उपदेस बिबिध बिधि कीन्हा ॥
जपउँ मंत्र सिव मंदिर जाई । हृदयँ दंभ अहमिति अधिकाई ॥ ४ ॥

Listen, O enemy of serpents: I went to Ujjain—miserable, downcast, penniless and afflicted. When some time had elapsed, I acquired some wealth and after that I began worshipping Lord Śambhu at that very place. There was a Brahman there who constantly worshipped Lord Śiva according to the Vedic rites and had no other occupation. He was an extremely pious soul and a knower of the highest truth, a votary of Lord Śambhu but no reviler of Śrī Hari. I served him though with a guileful heart. The Brahman was very kind-hearted and an abode of piety. Seeing me outwardly so humble, my lord, the Brahman taught me as his own son. The great Brahman imparted to me a mystic formula sacred to Lord Śambhu and gave me every kind of good advice. I used to go to a temple of Lord Śiva and repeat the formula there with unbounded ostentation and conceit in my heart. (1—4)

दो०—मैं खल मल संकुल मति नीच जाति बस मोह ।
हरि जन द्विज देखें जरउँ करउँ बिष्नु कर द्रोह ॥ १०५ (क) ॥
सो०—गुर नित मोहि प्रबोध दुखित देखि आचरन मम ।
मोहि उपजइ अति क्रोध दंभिहि नीति कि भावई ॥ १०५ (ख) ॥

A wretch impure of mind, low-born and overcome by infatuation, I was filled with jealousy at the very sight of a servant of Śrī Hari or a Brahman and hated God Viṣṇu. Distressed to see my conduct, my preceptor would admonish me every day; but on hearing his admonition I burnt with rage. Can sober counsel appeal to a hypocrite? (105 A-B)

चौ०—एक बार गुर लीन्ह बोलाई । मोहि नीति बहु भाँति सिखाई ॥
सिव सेवा कर फल सुत सोई । अबिरल भगति राम पद होई ॥ १ ॥
रामहि भजहिं तात सिव धाता । नर पावँर कै केतिक बाता ॥
जासु चरन अज सिव अनुरागी । तासु द्रोहँ सुख चहसि अभागी ॥ २ ॥
हर कहुँ हरि सेवक गुर कहेऊ । सुनि खगनाथ हृदय मम दहेऊ ॥
अधम जाति मैं बिद्या पाएँ । भयउँ जथा अहि दूध पिआएँ ॥ ३ ॥
मानी कुटिल कुभाग्य कुजाती । गुर कर द्रोह करउँ दिनु राती ॥
अति दयाल गुर स्वल्प न क्रोधा । पुनि पुनि मोहि सिखाव सुबोधा ॥ ४ ॥
जेहि ते नीच बड़ाई पावा । सो प्रथमहिं हति ताहि नसावा ॥
धूम अनल संभव सुनु भाई । तेहि बुझाव घन पदवी पाई ॥ ५ ॥
रज मग परी निरादर रहई । सब कर पद प्रहार नित सहई ॥
मरुत उड़ाव प्रथम तेहि भरई । पुनि नृप नयन किरीटन्हि परई ॥ ६ ॥
सुनु खगपति अस समुझि प्रसंगा । बुध नहिं करहिं अधम कर संगा ॥
कबि कोबिद गावहिं असि नीती । खल सन कलह न भल नहिं प्रीती ॥ ७ ॥
उदासीन नित रहिअ गोसाईं । खल परिहरिअ स्वान की नाईं ॥
मैं खल हृदयँ कपट कुटिलाई । गुर हित कहइ न मोहि सोहाई ॥ ८ ॥

One day my preceptor called me and taught me wisdom in every possible way: "The sole reward, my son, of worshipping Lord Śiva is uninterrupted devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet. Siva Himself as well as Brahmā (the Creator), dear son, adore Śrī Rāma; of what account, then, is a vile human being? Do you hope to attain happiness, O wretched soul, by harbouring ill-will to Him whose feet are loved by Brahmā and Śiva Himself?" When I heard my Guru speak of Lord Hara as a votary of Śrī Hari, my heart, O lord of the feathered kingdom, was all on fire. Vile of descent as I was, the little learning that I had acquired turned my head even as a serpent becomes all the more poisonous when fed on milk. Proud, perverse, wretched and low-born, I meditated mischief to my Guru day and night. My Guru, however, was too tender-hearted to have the least anger in him; on the other hand, he gave me good advice time after time. The first thing a vile fellow does is to kill and destroy the very man who has been instrumental

in exalting him. Listen, brother: smoke, which is produced by fire, extinguishes the latter when it attains to the dignity of a cloud. The dust lying on the road is held in contempt and is ever trodden under foot by all (the wayfarers). But, when carried aloft by the wind, it first envelopes the air itself and then descends on the eyes or diadems of kings. Listen, O lord of the winged creatures: realizing this state of things, the wise shun the company of vile men. Seers and learned men have declared this maxim: it is good neither to quarrel with a wretch nor to make friends with him. One should always remain aloof from him, my master; a wicked fellow should be avoided even as a dog. Vicious as I was with a heart full of falsehood and perversity, the Guru's admonition did not appeal to me, even though it was wholesome.

(1—8)

दो०—एक बार हर मंदिर जपत रहेउँ सिव नाम।
गुर आयउ अभिमान तें उठि नहिं कीन्ह प्रनाम ॥ १०६ (क) ॥
सो दयाल नहिं कहेउ कछु उर न रोष लवलेस।
अति अघ गुर अपमानता सहि नहिं सके महेस ॥ १०६ (ख) ॥

One day I was repeating Śiva's Name in a temple sacred to Lord Hara, when my Guru came in; but in my pride I did not rise to greet him. He was too gracious to say anything; neither did he feel the least resentment in his heart. But the grievous sin of showing disrespect to a Guru was more than the great Lord Śiva could tolerate. (106 A-B)

चौ०—मंदिर माझ भई नभबानी। रे हतभाग्य अग्य अभिमानी ॥
जद्यपि तव गुर कें नहिं क्रोधा। अति कृपाल चित सम्यक बोधा ॥ १ ॥
तदपि साप सठ दैहउँ तोही। नीति बिरोध सोहाइ न मोही ॥
जौं नहिं दंड करौं खल तोरा। भ्रष्ट होइ श्रुतिमारग मोरा ॥ २ ॥
जे सठ गुर सन इरिषा करहीं। रौरव नरक कोटि जुग परहीं ॥
त्रिजग जोनि पुनि धरहिं सरीरा। अयुत जन्म भरि पावहिं पीरा ॥ ३ ॥
बैठ रहेसि अजगर इव पापी। सर्प होहि खल मल मति ब्यापी ॥
महा बिटप कोटर महुँ जाई। रहु अधमाधम अधगति पाई ॥ ४ ॥

An ethereal voice proceeded from the temple itself: "You wretched and conceited fool, even though your preceptor has no anger in him and he is very tender-hearted and possessed of true and perfect wisdom, yet, O fool, I must pronounce a curse on you; for any transgression of propriety is loathsome to Me. If I do not punish you, O wretch, the sanctity of My Vedic laws will be violated. The fools who bear malice against their Guru are cast into the hell named Raurava for a myriad Yugas. After that they take birth in the subhuman species and suffer torment for ten thousand successive existences. Since you remained rooted to your seat like a python, O vile wretch, take the form of a snake; for your mind is steeped in sin. And, condemned to that vile state, O vilest of the vile, go and take up your abode in the hollow of some huge tree."

(1—4)

दो०—हाहाकार कीन्ह गुर दारुन सुनि सिव साप ।
कंपित मोहि बिलोकि अति उर उपजा परिताप ॥ १०७ (क) ॥
करि दंडवत सप्रेम द्विज सिव सन्मुख कर जोरि ।
बिनय करत गदगद स्वर समुझि घोर गति मोरि ॥ १०७ (ख) ॥

The Guru raised a piteous wail as he heard Lord Śiva's terrible curse. And when he saw me trembling with fear, deep agony possessed his soul. Reflecting on my awful fate, the Brahman prostrated himself before Lord Śiva and, with joined palms and his voice choked with emotion, he prayed as follows:— (107 A-B)

छं०—नमामीशमीशान निर्वाणरूपं । विभुं व्यापकं ब्रह्म वेदस्वरूपं ॥
निजं निर्गुणं निर्विकल्पं निरीहं । चिदाकाशमाकाशवासं भजेऽहं ॥ १ ॥
निराकारमोंकारमूलं तुरीयं । गिरा ग्यान गोतीतमीशं गिरीशं ॥
करालं महाकाल कालं कृपालं । गुणागार संसारपारं नतोऽहं ॥ २ ॥
तुषाराद्रि संकाश गौरं गभीरं । मनोभूत कोटि प्रभा श्री शरीरं ॥
स्फुरन्मौलि कल्लोलिनी चारु गंगा । लसद्भालबालेन्दु कंठे भुजंगा ॥ ३ ॥
चलत्कुंडलं भ्रू सुनेत्रं विशालं । प्रसन्नाननं नीलकंठं दयालं ॥
मृगाधीशचर्माम्बरं मुण्डमालं । प्रियं शंकरं सर्वनाथं भजामि ॥ ४ ॥
प्रचंडं प्रकृष्टं प्रगल्भं परेशं । अखंडं अजं भानुकोटिप्रकाशं ॥
त्रयः शूल निर्मूलनं शूलपाणिं । भजेऽहं भवानीपतिं भावगम्यं ॥ ५ ॥
कलातीत कल्याण कल्पान्तकारी । सदा सज्जनानन्ददाता पुरारी ॥
चिदानंद संदोह मोहापहारी । प्रसीद प्रसीद प्रभो मन्मथारी ॥ ६ ॥
न यावद् उमानाथ पादारविन्दं । भजंतीह लोके परे वा नराणां ॥
न तावत्सुखं शान्ति सन्तापनाशं । प्रसीद प्रभो सर्वभूताधिवासं ॥ ७ ॥
न जानामि योगं जपं नैव पूजां । नतोऽहं सदा सर्वदा शंभु तुभ्यं ॥
जरा जन्म दुःखौघ तातप्यमानं । प्रभो पाहि आपन्नमामीश शंभो ॥ ८ ॥

"I adore You, the guardian of the south-east quarter and Ruler of the whole universe, eternal bliss personified, the omnipresent and all-pervading Brahma manifest in the form of the Vedas. I worship Lord Śiva, shining in His own glory, devoid of material attributes, undifferentiated, desireless, all-pervading consciousness, having nothing to wrap about Himself except ether (or enveloping ether itself). I bow to the supreme Lord, who is devoid of form, transcendent and extra-cosmic, beyond speech, understanding and sense-perception, terrible yet gracious, the seed of the mystic syllable OM, the Ruler of Kailāsa, the Devourer even of the great Time-Spirit and the abode of virtues. I adore the all-merciful Śankara, the universal Lord, who is loved by

all, and yet unfathomable, who is possessed of a form white as the snow clad Himālaya, and radiant with the beauty of a myriad Cupids whose head sparkles with the lovely stream of the Gangā, whose brow is adorned by the crescent moon and neck coiled by serpents, who has tremulous pendants hanging from His ear-lobes, is possessed of beautiful eyebrows and large eyes, who has a cheerful countenance and a blue speck on His throat, and who has a lion-skin wrapped round His waist and a garland of skulls round His neck. I take my refuge in Bhavānī's Spouse, the supreme Lord, terrible, exalted, intrepid, indivisible, unborn and invested with the glory of a myriad suns, who roots out the threefold agony and holds a trident in His hand and who is accessible only through love. Beyond number, ever blessed, bringing about universal destruction at the end of each round of creation, a source of perpetual delight to the virtuous, Slayer of the demon Tripura, Consciousness and Bliss personified, dispeller of delusion, be propitious, my lord, be propitious, O Destroyer of Cupid. So long as they worship not the lotus feet of Umā's lord, there is no happiness nor peace nor cessation of suffering for men either in this world or in the next. Therefore, be propitious, my lord, dwelling as You do in the heart of all living beings. I know not Yoga (concentration), nor Japa (the muttering of prayers) nor ritual. I simply bow to You at all times and at every moment; O Śambhu! Pray, protect me, my lord, miserable and afflicted by sufferings attendant on old age and birth (and death) as I am, O Lord Śambhu!" (1–8)

श्लोक—रुद्राष्टकमिदं प्रोक्तं विप्रेण हरतोषये ।
ये पठन्ति नरा भक्त्या तेषां शम्भुः प्रसीदति ॥ ९ ॥

This hymn of eight verses was uttered by the Brahman in order to propitiate Lord Hara. Śrī Śambhu is pleased with those men who devoutly repeat it (9)

दो०—सुनि बिनती सर्बग्य सिव देखि बिप्र अनुरागु ।
पुनि मंदिर नभबानी भइ द्विजबर बर मागु ॥ १०८ (क) ॥
जौं प्रसन्न प्रभु मो पर नाथ दीन पर नेहु ।
निज पद भगति देइ प्रभु पुनि दूसर बर देहु ॥ १०८ (ख) ॥
तव माया बस जीव जड़ संतत फिरइ भुलान ।
तेहि पर क्रोध न करिअ प्रभु कृपासिंधु भगवान ॥ १०८ (ग) ॥
संकर दीनदयाल अब एहि पर होहु कृपाल ।
साप अनुग्रह होइ जेहिं नाथ थोरेहीं काल ॥ १०८ (घ) ॥

The all-wise Śiva heard the Brahman's prayer and saw his devotion. An ethereal voice issued from the temple again: "Ask for a boon, O great Brahman." "If, my lord, You are pleased with me and if, my master, You are affectionate to the meek, first bless me with devotion to Your feet and then grant me another boon. Overcome by Your Māyā (delusive power) the stupid Jīva (individual

soul) constantly wanders (from one womb to another) in error. Therefore, O all-merciful Lord, be not angry with him. Now be gracious to this creature, O Sankara, compassionate as You are to the humble, so that Your curse may prove a blessing to him not long afterwards. (108 A—D)

चौ०—एहि कर होइ परम कल्याना । सोइ करहु अब कृपानिधाना ॥
बिप्र गिरा सुनि परहित सानी । एवमस्तु इति भइ नभबानी ॥ १ ॥
जदपि कीन्ह एहिं दारुन पापा । मैं पुनि दीन्हि कोप करि सापा ॥
तदपि तुम्हारि साधुता देखी । करिहउँ एहि पर कृपा बिसेषी ॥ २ ॥
छमासील जे पर उपकारी । ते द्विज मोहि प्रिय जथा खरारी ॥
मोर श्राप द्विज ब्यर्थ न जाइहि । जन्म सहस अवस्य यह पाइहि ॥ ३ ॥
जनमत मरत दुसह दुख होई । एहि स्वल्पउ नहिं ब्यापिहि सोई ॥
कवनेउँ जन्म मिटिहि नहिं ग्याना । सुनहि सूद्र मम बचन प्रवाना ॥ ४ ॥
रघुपति पुरीं जन्म तव भयऊ । पुनि तैं मम सेवाँ मन दयऊ ॥
पुरी प्रभाव अनुग्रह मोरें । राम भगति उपजिहि उर तोरें ॥ ५ ॥
सुनु मम बचन सत्य अब भाई । हरितोषन ब्रत द्विज सेवकाई ॥
अब जनि करहि बिप्र अपमाना । जानेसु संत अनंत समाना ॥ ६ ॥
इंद्र कुलिस मम सूल बिसाला । कालदंड हरि चक्र कराला ॥
जो इन्ह कर मारा नहिं मरई । बिप्र द्रोह पावक सो जरई ॥ ७ ॥
अस बिबेक राखेहु मन माहीं । तुम्ह कहँ जग दुर्लभ कछु नाहीं ॥
औरउ एक आसिषा मोरी । अप्रतिहत गति होइहि तोरी ॥ ८ ॥

"Now do that which may bring him supreme blessedness, O fountain of mercy!" On hearing the Brahman's words steeped as they were in charity, the heavenly voice replied: "So be it! Although he has committed a grievous sin and I in My wrath have pronounced a curse on him, yet, realizing your goodness I shall do him a special favour. O holy Brahman, they who are of a forgiving disposition and beneficent are as dear to Me as Srī Rāma (the Slayer of the demon Khara) Himself. Nonetheless, O Brahman, My curse shall not go in vain: this fellow shall surely pass through a thousand incarnations. But the terrible agony involved in each successive birth and death shall not affect him in the least. (Turning to me, the voice continued:) Hear, O Sudra, my authentic word: in none of your births shall your awareness (of previous existences) leave you. (In the first place) You were born in the capital of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), and besides that you set your heart on My worship. Due to the miraculous power of the holy city and by My grace, devotion to Śrī Rāma shall spring up in your bosom. Now, brother, hear My solemn declaration: a vow to serve the Brahmans is the surest means of propitiating Srī Hari. Insult the Brahmans no more and reckon a saint to be on a par with the infinite Lord Himself. Even he who does not succumb to the stroke of Indra's thunderbolt, My own mighty trident, the rod of Death and the terrible discus of Śrī Hari, is consumed by the fire of hostility with the Brahmans. Treasure up this counsel in your heart, and there will be nothing in this world which may be too difficult for you to attain. I bestow one more blessing on you: you shall have unobstructed access everywhere."

(1—8)

दो०—सुनि सिव बचन हरषि गुर एवमस्तु इति भाषि ।
मोहि प्रबोधि गयउ गृह संभु चरन उर राखि ॥ १०९ (क) ॥
प्रेरित काल बिंधि गिरि जाइ भयउँ मैं ब्याल ।
पुनि प्रयास बिनु सो तनु तजेउँ गएँ कछु काल ॥ १०९ (ख) ॥
जोइ तनु धरउँ तजउँ पुनि अनायास हरिजान ।
जिमि नूतन पट पहिरइ नर परिहरइ पुरान ॥ १०९ (ग) ॥
सिवँ राखी श्रुति नीति अरु मैं नहिं पावा क्लेस ।
एहि बिधि धरेउँ बिबिधि तनु ग्यान न गयउ खगेस ॥ १०९ (घ) ॥

The Guru rejoiced to hear the word of Lord Siva (as conveyed through the ethereal voice) and cried 'Amen And after admonishing me he returned home, with the image of Lord Sambhu's feet impressed upon his heart. Driven by my fate I went to the Vindhya mountains and was (on giving up the ghost) reborn as a serpent and again, when some time had elapsed, I easily dropped that form. Whatever form I assumed, O mount of Srī Hari, I dropped again with utmost ease, even as a man would cast off worn-out clothes and put on a new set. Lord Śiva vindicated the Vedic law, while I was spared the agony (involved in the rounds of birth and death). In this way, O lord of the winged creatures, I assumed various forms; but my understanding never left me. (109 A—D)

चौ०—त्रिजग देव नर जोइ तनु धरऊँ । तहँ तहँ राम भजन अनुसरऊँ ॥
एक सूल मोहि बिसर न काऊ । गुर कर कोमल सील सुभाऊ ॥ १ ॥
चरम देह द्विज कै मैं पाई । सुर दुर्लभ पुरान श्रुति गाई ॥
खेलउँ तहूँ बालकन्ह मीला । करउँ सकल रघुनायक लीला ॥ २ ॥
प्रौढ़ भएँ मोहि पिता पढ़ावा । समझउँ सुनउँ गुनउँ नहिं भावा ॥
मन ते सकल बासना भागी । केवल राम चरन लय लागी ॥ ३ ॥
कहु खगेस अस कवन अभागी । खरी सेव सुरधेनुहि त्यागी ॥
प्रेम मगन मोहि कछु न सोहाई । हारेउ पिता पढ़ाइ पढ़ाई ॥ ४ ॥
भए कालबस जब पितु माता । मैं बन गयउँ भजन जनत्राता ॥
जहँ जहँ बिपिन मुनीस्वर पावउँ । आश्रम जाइ जाइ सिरु नावउँ ॥ ५ ॥
बूझउँ तिन्हहि राम गुन गाहा । कहहिं सुनउँ हरषित खगनाहा ॥
सुनत फिरउँ हरि गुन अनुबादा । अब्याहत गति संभु प्रसादा ॥ ६ ॥
छूटी त्रिबिधि ईषना गाढ़ी । एक लालसा उर अति बाढ़ी ॥
राम चरन बारिज जब देखौं । तब निज जन्म सफल करि लेखौं ॥ ७ ॥
जेहि पूँछउँ सोइ मुनि अस कहई । ईस्वर सर्ब भूतमय अहई ॥
निर्गुन मत नहिं मोहि सोहाई । सगुन ब्रह्म रति उर अधिकाई ॥ ८ ॥

Whatever form I assumed, whether of an irrational being, god or man, I continued to adore Srī Rāma even in that form. Yet one thing ever stung my conscience: my Guru's mild and amiable disposition I could never forget.

The last body I got was that of a Brahman, which the Vedas and Purāṇas declare as difficult even for the gods to attain. Even in that incarnation whenever I joined the other boys for play, I would enact all the pastimes of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) alone. As I grew up my father gave me lessons (in secular subjects). I tried to understand things, listened to the lessons and reflected on them; yet they failed to attract my mind. All worldly cravings left my soul; I was solely absorbed in the thought of Śrī Rāma's feet. Tell me, O lord of the feathered creation: is there anyone so wretched as to give up a cow of plenty and tend a she-ass? Overwhelmed with love I had no charm left for anything and my father was tired of coaching me. When both my father and mother died, I withdrew to the forest in order to worship the Protector of His servants. In the forest wherever I met any great sage I visited his hermitage and bowed my head to him. I would ask them to recount Śrī Rāma's virtues and listened with delight to what they told me O lord of the winged creatures! In this way I went about listening to the recital of Śrī Hari's praises. By Sambhu's grace my movements were unchecked everywhere. The three types of ardent seeking (viz., those for progeny, wealth and fame) left me and one solitary longing grew to inordinate proportions in my heart. "I shall deem the object of my birth accomplished only when I behold Śrī Rāma's lotus feet," I said to myself. Every sage I interrogated observed, "God represents the totality of created beings." But the view which holds God as impersonal did not find favour with me and the love I bore in my heart for the embodied Brahma grew from more to more.

(1—8)

दो०—गुर के बचन सुरति करि राम चरन मनु लाग।
रघुपति जस गावत फिरउँ छन छन नव अनुराग ॥ ११० (क) ॥
मेरु सिखर बट छायाँ मुनि लोमस आसीन।
देखि चरन सिरु नायउँ बचन कहेउँ अति दीन ॥ ११० (ख) ॥
सुनि मम बचन बिनीत मृदु मुनि कृपाल खगराज।
मोहि सादर पूँछत भए द्विज आयहु केहि काज ॥ ११० (ग) ॥
तब मैं कहा कृपानिधि तुम्ह सर्बग्य सुजान।
सगुन ब्रह्म अवराधन मोहि कहहु भगवान ॥ ११० (घ) ॥

Even as I recalled the words of my erstwhile preceptor my mind conceived a fondness for Śrī Rāma's feet and I went about singing the praises of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) with a love which gathered new strength every moment. On a peak of Mount Meru in the shade of a banyan tree sat the sage Lomaśa. On seeing him I bowed at his feet and addressed him in the humblest strain. When the gracious sage heard my meek and gentle address, O king of the birds, he politely enquired: "For what purpose have you come, O Brahman?" Thereupon I replied, "O fountain of mercy, you are omniscient and sagacious. Tell me, blessed one, how to worship the embodied supreme Spirit.' (110 A—D)

चौ०—तब मुनीस रघुपति गुन गाथा। कहे कछुक सादर खगनाथा ॥
ब्रह्मग्यान रत मुनि बिग्यानी। मोहि परम अधिकारी जानी ॥ १ ॥

लागे करन ब्रह्म उपदेसा। अज अद्वैत अगुन हृदयेसा॥
अकल अनीह अनाम अरूपा। अनुभव गम्य अखंड अनूपा॥ २॥
मन गोतीत अमल अबिनासी। निर्बिकार निरवधि सुख रासी॥
सो तैं ताहि तोहि नहिं भेदा। बारि बीचि इव गावहिं बेदा॥ ३॥
बिबिधि भाँति मोहि मुनि समुझावा। निर्गुन मत मम हृदयँ न आवा॥
पुनि मैं कहेउँ नाइ पद सीसा। सगुन उपासन कहहु मुनीसा॥ ४॥
राम भगति जल मम मन मीना। किमि बिलगाइ मुनीस प्रबीना॥
सोइ उपदेस कहहु करि दाया। निज नयनन्हि देखौं रघुराया॥ ५॥
भरि लोचन बिलोकि अवधेसा। तब सुनिहउँ निर्गुन उपदेसा॥
मुनि पुनि कहि हरिकथा अनूपा। खंडि सगुन मत अगुन निरूपा॥ ६॥
तब मैं निर्गुन मत कर दूरी। सगुन निरूपउँ करि हठ भूरी॥
उत्तर प्रतिउत्तर मैं कीन्हा। मुनि तन भए क्रोध के चीन्हा॥ ७॥
सुनु प्रभु बहुत अवग्या किएँ। उपज क्रोध ग्यानिन्ह के हिएँ॥
अति संघरषन जौं कर कोई। अनल प्रगट चंदन ते होई॥ ८॥

Thereupon the great sage recounted with reverence a few virtues of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), O lord of the feathered creation. But himself devoted to the knowledge of Brahma (the Absolute), and knowing me to be the fittest person (to be initiated into such knowledge), the enlightened sage began a sermon on Brahma, the unborn, the One without a second and without attributes, the Ruler of the heart (the inner Controller), incomprehensible, desireless, without name or form, attainable only through realization, indivisible and incomparable, beyond the mind and the senses, immaculate and indestructible, immutable, unlimited and all-blissful: "You are identical with the Brahma referred to above; no more difference exists between Him and you than between a sheet of water and the ripples on its surface: so declare the Vedas.' The sage instructed me in various ways; but the truth that the individual soul is identical with the attributeless Brahma did not appeal to my heart. Bowing my head at his feet I submitted again, "Kindly tell me how to worship the embodied Brahma, O lord of the sages. My mind takes delight in the worship of Śrī Rāma even as a fish rejoices in water; how, then, can it exist without it, O wise lord of the sages? Be gracious, therefore, to teach me the method whereby I may be able to behold the Lord of the Raghus with my own eyes. Having feasted my eyes on the King of Ayodhyā I will then listen to your discourse on the attributeless Brahma." The sage once more recited the incomparable story of Śrī Hari; but demolishing the doctrine that the supreme Spirit does appear in an embodied form, he established the proposition that He is ever without attributes. Thereupon I would set aside the view that God is ever attributeless and establish with great obstinacy the doctrine that He takes an embodied form. When I thus entered into hot discussion with him, signs of resentment appeared on the sage's person. Listen, my lord: insolence carried to an excess rouses passion even in the breast of an enlightened soul. Too much friction will produce fire even out of sandal-wood. (1–8)

दो०—बारंबार सकोप मुनि करइ निरूपन ग्यान ।
मैं अपनें मन बैठ तब करउँ बिबिधि अनुमान ॥ १११ (क) ॥
क्रोध कि द्वैतबुद्धि बिनु द्वैत कि बिनु अग्यान ।
मायाबस परिछिन्न जड़ जीव कि ईस समान ॥ १११ (ख) ॥

Again and again in the heat of passion the sage expatiated on spiritual wisdom, while I sat still and put myself various questions: "Can there be anger without duality or duality without ignorance? Can an individual soul, dull, finite and subject to Māyā, ever be on a par with God? (111 A-B)

चौ०—कबहुँ कि दुख सब कर हित ताकें । तेहि कि दरिद्र परस मनि जाकें ॥
परद्रोही की होहिं निसंका । कामी पुनि कि रहहिं अकलंका ॥ १ ॥
बंस कि रह द्विज अनहित कीन्हें । कर्म कि होहिं स्वरूपहि चीन्हें ॥
काहू सुमति कि खल सँग जामी । सुभ गति पाव कि परत्रिय गामी ॥ २ ॥
भव कि परहिं परमात्मा बिंदक । सुखी कि होहिं कबहुँ हरि निंदक ॥
राजु कि रहइ नीति बिनु जानें । अघ कि रहहिं हरिचरित बखानें ॥ ३ ॥
पावन जस कि पुन्य बिनु होई । बिनु अघ अजस कि पावइ कोई ॥
लाभु कि किछु हरि भगति समाना । जेहि गावहिं श्रुति संत पुराना ॥ ४ ॥
हानि कि जग एहि सम किछु भाई । भजिअ न रामहि नर तनु पाई ॥
अघ कि पिसुनता सम कछु आना । धर्म कि दया सरिस हरिजाना ॥ ५ ॥
एहि बिधि अमिति जुगुति मन गुनऊँ । मुनि उपदेस न सादर सुनऊँ ॥
पुनि पुनि सगुन पच्छ मैं रोपा । तब मुनि बोलेउ बचन सकोपा ॥ ६ ॥
मूढ़ परम सिख देउँ न मानसि । उत्तर प्रतिउत्तर बहु आनसि ॥
सत्य बचन बिस्वास न करही । बायस इव सबही ते डरही ॥ ७ ॥
सठ स्वपच्छ तव हृदयँ बिसाला । सपदि होहि पच्छी चंडाला ॥
लीन्ह श्राप मैं सीस चढ़ाई । नहिं कछु भय न दीनता आई ॥ ८ ॥

"Can suffering ensue from solicitude for others' well-being? Can anyone possessing the philosopher's stone suffer from want any longer? Can the malevolent be free from anxiety? Can the sensualist escape obloquy? Can one's posterity survive even though one has persecuted the Brahmans? Can one continue to perform actions (with attachment) even after attaining Self-Realization? Has anyone acquired sound wisdom while living in the company of the vicious? Can an adulterer attain a happy destiny? Can those who have realized God fall again into the ocean of transmigration? Can the revilers of Śrī Hari be ever happy? Can a kingdom stand without a knowledge of statecraft? Can sins persist even after one has commenced narrating Śrī Hari's exploits? Can one enjoy sacred renown without religious merit and can any one earn a bad reputation without a sin? Is there any gain as valuable as Devotion to Śrī Hari, which is glorified alike by saints as well as by the Vedas and Purāṇas? And, brother, is there any loss in the world as grievous as that of the man who fails to adore Śrī Rāma even after

obtaining a human body? Is there any other sin so bad as backbiting or any virtue so great as compassion, O mount of Śrī Hari?" In this way I mentally advanced numberless arguments in my favour and did not listen to the sage's teaching with any reverence. Again and again I maintained the cause of the Saguna form of worship (the worship of an embodied Deity), till at last the sage uttered these angry words: "Fool, you refuse to accept the supreme lesson I have been inculcating on you and indulge in endless arguments and counter-arguments. You give no credence to my authentic words and, like a crow, look on everything with distrust! Fool, you are exceedingly self-opinionated; therefore, you shall at once take the form of a crow (the pariah among birds)." I bowed to the curse pronounced by the sage but felt neither alarmed nor humbled. (1—8)

दो०—तुरत भयउँ मैं काग तव पुनि मुनि पद सिरु नाइ ।
सुमिरि राम रघुबंस मनि हरषित चलेउँ उड़ाइ ॥ ११२ (क) ॥
उमा जे राम चरन रत बिगत काम मद क्रोध ।
निज प्रभुमय देखहिं जगत केहि सन करहिं बिरोध ॥ ११२ (ख) ॥

I was immediately transformed into a crow. Thereupon I bowed my head at the sage's feet again and, fixing my thoughts on Śrī Rāma, the Jewel of Raghu's line, joyfully took flight. Umā, (continues Lord Śankara,) they who are devoted to Śrī Rāma's feet and are free from lust, vanity and anger look upon the whole world as full of their lord; against whom can they harbour animosity? (112 A-B)

चौ०—सुनु खगेस नहिं कछु रिषि दूषन । उर प्रेरक रघुबंस बिभूषन ॥
कृपासिंधु मुनि मति करि भोरी । लीन्ही प्रेम परिच्छा मोरी ॥ १ ॥
मन बच क्रम मोहि निज जन जाना । मुनि मति पुनि फेरी भगवाना ॥
रिषि मम महत सीलता देखी । राम चरन बिस्वास बिसेषी ॥ २ ॥
अति बिसमय पुनि पुनि पछिताई । सादर मुनि मोहि लीन्ह बोलाई ॥
मम परितोष बिबिधि बिधि कीन्हा । हरषित राममंत्र तब दीन्हा ॥ ३ ॥
बालकरूप राम कर ध्याना । कहेउ मोहि मुनि कृपानिधाना ॥
सुंदर सुखद मोहि अति भावा । सो प्रथमहिं मैं तुम्हहि सुनावा ॥ ४ ॥
मुनि मोहि कछुक काल तहँ राखा । रामचरितमानस तब भाषा ॥
सादर मोहि यह कथा सुनाई । पुनि बोले मुनि गिरा सुहाई ॥ ५ ॥
रामचरित सर गुप्त सुहावा । संभु प्रसाद तात मैं पावा ॥
तोहि निज भगत राम कर जानी । ताते मैं सब कहेउँ बखानी ॥ ६ ॥
राम भगति जिन्ह कें उर नाहीं । कबहुँ न तात कहिअ तिन्ह पाहीं ॥
मुनि मोहि बिबिधि भाँति समुझावा । मैं सप्रेम मुनि पद सिरु नावा ॥ ७ ॥
निज कर कमल परसि मम सीसा । हरषित आसिष दीन्ह मुनीसा ॥
राम भगति अबिरल उर तोरें । बसिहि सदा प्रसाद अब मोरें ॥ ८ ॥

Listen, O lord of the winged creatures: the sage was in no way at fault; it is Śrī Rāma (the Ornament of Raghu's race) who prompts all

hearts. The All-merciful put my devotion to the test by clouding the sage's reason. When He came to know that I was His devoted servant in thought, word and deed, the Lord disabused the saint again. The sage was amazed at my extraordinary forbearance and the unique faith in Śrī Rāma's feet and, repenting again and again, politely called me back. He consoled me in every way and then gladly imparted to me the formula sacred to Śrī Rāma. The gracious sage also taught me how to meditate on Śrī Rāma as a child. The form which I was thus taught to fix my thoughts upon, charming and delightful as it was, pleased me much; I have already told you the same. The sage detained me in his hermitage for some time and then recited the "Rāmacharitamānasa" (the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits). Having reverently repeated the story the sage then addressed me in the following gracious words: "I discovered this secret and charming lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, dear son, by the grace of Lord Śambhu. I have come to know that you are a beloved devotee of Śrī Rāma; hence I recited it to you in full. Never repeat it, dear child, in the presence of those whose heart is void of devotion to Śrī Rāma." The sage admonished me in various ways and I lovingly bowed my head at his feet. The great sage touched my head with his lotus palm and gladly gave me his blessing: "Henceforth, by my grace, devotion to Śrī Rāma shall ever abide in your heart and know no interruption. (1—8)

दो०—सदा राम प्रिय होहु तुम्ह सुभ गुन भवन अमान ।
कामरूप इच्छामरन ग्यान बिराग निधान ॥ ११३ (क) ॥
जेहिं आश्रम तुम्ह बसब पुनि सुमिरत श्रीभगवंत ।
ब्यापिहि तहँ न अबिद्या जोजन एक प्रजंत ॥ ११३ (ख) ॥

"You shall ever be a favourite with Śrī Rāma and a storehouse of good qualities, free from pride, changing your form at will and choosing your own time for death, and a repository of wisdom and dispassion. Nay, in whatever hermitage you live with your thought fixed on the Lord, ignorance will have no access within a radius of eight miles from it. (113 A-B)

चौ०—काल कर्म गुन दोष सुभाऊ । कछु दुख तुम्हहि न ब्यापिहि काऊ ॥
राम रहस्य ललित बिधि नाना । गुप्त प्रगट इतिहास पुराना ॥ १ ॥
बिनु श्रम तुम्ह जानब सब सोऊ । नित नव नेह राम पद होऊ ॥
जो इच्छा करिहहु मन माहीं । हरि प्रसाद कछु दुर्लभ नाहीं ॥ २ ॥
सुनि मुनि आसिष सुनु मतिधीरा । ब्रह्मगिरा भइ गगन गँभीरा ॥
एवमस्तु तव बच मुनि ग्यानी । यह मम भगत कर्म मन बानी ॥ ३ ॥
सुनि नभगिरा हरष मोहि भयऊ । प्रेम मगन सब संसय गयऊ ॥
करि बिनती मुनि आयसु पाई । पद सरोज पुनि पुनि सिरु नाई ॥ ४ ॥
हरष सहित एहिं आश्रम आयउँ । प्रभु प्रसाद दुर्लभ बर पायउँ ॥
इहाँ बसत मोहि सुनु खग ईसा । बीते कलप सात अरु बीसा ॥ ५ ॥
करउँ सदा रघुपति गुन गाना । सादर सुनहिं बिहंग सुजाना ॥
जब जब अवधपुरीं रघुबीरा । धरहिं भगत हित मनुज सरीरा ॥ ६ ॥

तब तब जाइ राम पुर रहऊँ । सिसुलीला बिलोकि सुख लहऊँ ॥
पुनि उर राखि राम सिसुरूपा । निज आश्रम आवउँ खगभूपा ॥ ७ ॥
कथा सकल मैं तुम्हहि सुनाई । काग देह जेहिं कारन पाई ॥
कहिउँ तात सब प्रस्न तुम्हारी । राम भगति महिमा अति भारी ॥ ८ ॥

"No suffering occasioned by time, fate, merit, demerit or disposition shall ever torment you. The manifold charming mysteries of Śrī Rāma, that are found mentioned in the chronicles and Purāṇas either explicitly or implicitly, you will come to know without any difficulty; and the flame of your devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet will grow ever brighter and brighter. Whatever longing you may entertain in your mind, you shall have no difficulty in attaining it by the grace of Śrī Hari." On hearing the sage's benediction, mark me, O Garuḍa of steadfast reason, a deep voice—which was evidently the voice of the Supreme Spirit—was heard from the heavens: "May your prophesy come to be true, O enlightened sage! He is My votary in thought, word and deed." I rejoiced to hear the heavenly voice and stood overwhelmed with love and rid of all my doubts. On receiving the sage's permission in response to my prayer I repeatedly bowed my head at his feet and gladly came away to this hermitage, having obtained by the Lord's grace a rare boon. Listen, O lord of the feathered creation: I have now lived in this hermitage for seven and twenty rounds of creation. I am ever engaged in hymning the praises of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), while enlightened birds reverently listen to them. Each time the Hero of Raghu's line assumes the form of a man in the city of Ayodhyā for the sake of His devotees I go and stay at the capital of Śrī Rāma and enjoy the spectacle of His childish sports. Again, enshrining an image of the child Rāma in my heart I return to my hermitage, O king of the birds. I have now told you all the circumstances that invested me with the form of a crow, and have also replied to all your queries. The glory of devotion to Śrī Rāma is superb indeed. (1–8)

दो०—ताते यह तन मोहि प्रिय भयउ राम पद नेह ।
निज प्रभु दरसन पायउँ गए सकल संदेह ॥ ११४ (क) ॥

I love this body only because it was in this body that devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet sprang up in my heart, I was blessed with the sight of my lord and all my doubts vanished. (114 A)

[PAUSE 29 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

भगति पच्छ हठ करि रहेउँ दीन्हि महारिषि साप ।
मुनि दुर्लभ बर पायउँ देखहु भजन प्रताप ॥ ११४ (ख) ॥

I stubbornly upheld the cause of Devotion, for which the great sage Lomaśa cursed me; but eventually I obtained a boon which is difficult even for the sages to obtain! Witness the efficacy of adoration. (114 B)

चौ०—जे असि भगति जानि परिहरहीं । केवल ग्यान हेतु श्रम करहीं ॥
ते जड़ कामधेनु गृहँ त्यागी । खोजत आकु फिरहिं पय लागी ॥ १ ॥

सुनु खगेस हरि भगति बिहाई । जे सुख चाहहिं आन उपाई ॥
ते सठ महासिंधु बिनु तरनी । पैरि पार चाहहिं जड़ करनी ॥ २ ॥
सुनि भसुंडि के बचन भवानी । बोलेउ गरुड़ हरषि मृदु बानी ॥
तव प्रसाद प्रभु मम उर माहीं । संसय सोक मोह भ्रम नाहीं ॥ ३ ॥
सुनेउँ पुनीत राम गुन ग्रामा । तुम्हरी कृपाँ लहेउँ बिश्रामा ॥
एक बात प्रभु पूँछउँ तोही । कहहु बुझाइ कृपानिधि मोही ॥ ४ ॥
कहहिं संत मुनि बेद पुराना । नहिं कछु दुर्लभ ग्यान समाना ॥
सोइ मुनि तुम्ह सन कहेउ गोसाईं । नहिं आदरेहु भगति की नाईं ॥ ५ ॥
ग्यानहि भगतिहि अंतर केता । सकल कहहु प्रभु कृपा निकेता ॥
सुनि उरगारि बचन सुख माना । सादर बोलेउ काग सुजाना ॥ ६ ॥
भगतिहि ग्यानहि नहिं कछु भेदा । उभय हरहिं भव संभव खेदा ॥
नाथ मुनीस कहहिं कछु अंतर । सावधान सोउ सुनु बिहंगबर ॥ ७ ॥
ग्यान बिराग जोग बिग्याना । ए सब पुरुष सुनहु हरिजाना ॥
पुरुष प्रताप प्रबल सब भाँती । अबला अबल सहज जड़ जाती ॥ ८ ॥

They who knowingly cast aside such Devotion and take pains to acquire mere wisdom are fools who would leave alone the cow of plenty at their own house and knock about in search of the Āk plant (the milk-weed) to get milk out of it. Listen, O lord of the winged creatures: the fools who ignore Bhakti and seek happiness by any other means stupidly seek to swim across the ocean without the help of a vessel." Garuḍa, O Bhavānī, (continues Lord Śaṅkara,) rejoiced to hear Bhuśuṇḍi's words and submitted in gentle accents: "By your grace, my lord, doubt, sorrow, error and delusion have disappeared from my heart. I have also listened to the praises of Śrī Rāma and attained peace of mind by your blessing. My lord, I ask you one question more: pray, explain the whole thing clearly O ocean of compassion. The saints and sages as well as the Vedas and Purāṇas declare that there is nothing so difficult of attainment as wisdom. Although the sage (Lomaśa) instructed you in the same, my lord, you did not show the same amount of regard for Gnosis as for Devotion. Explain to me, my gracious lord, all the difference between Gnosis and Devotion." The sagacious crow was gratified to hear the question of Garuḍa (the enemy of the serpents) and politely replied, "There is no difference whatsoever between Gnosis and Devotion: both are equally efficacious in relieving the torments of birth and death. Great sages nonetheless point out some difference between the two, my lord: listen to the same with rapt attention, O chief of the birds! Wisdom, dispassion, Yoga (union with God) and Realization—mark me—are all masculine in conception, O mount of Śrī Hari! The might of man is formidable indeed; while a woman is naturally weak and dull by her very birth. (1—8)

दो०—पुरुष त्यागि सक नारिहि जो बिरक्त मतिधीर ।
न तु कामी बिषयाबस बिमुख जो पद रघुबीर ॥ ११५ (क) ॥
सो०—सोउ मुनि ग्याननिधान मृगनयनी बिधु मुख निरखि ।
बिबस होइ हरिजान नारि बिष्नु माया प्रगट ॥ ११५ (ख) ॥

But that man alone who is unattached and resolute of mind can forswear woman,—not the sensual voluptuary, who has turned his face against the feet of Srī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line). But even such an enlightened sage, O mount of Śrī Hari, succumbs to the charms of a pretty woman at the very sight of her moonlike face. It is God Viṣṇu's own Māyā (deluding potency) that manifests itself in the form of a woman! (115 A-B)

चौ०—इहाँ न पच्छपात कछु राखउँ। बेद पुरान संत मत भाषउँ॥
मोह न नारि नारि कें रूपा। पन्नगारि यह रीति अनूपा॥१॥
माया भगति सुनहु तुम्ह दोऊ। नारि बर्ग जानइ सब कोऊ॥
पुनि रघुबीरहि भगति पिआरी। माया खलु नर्तकी बिचारी॥२॥
भगतिहि सानुकूल रघुराया। ताते तेहि डरपति अति माया॥
राम भगति निरुपम निरुपाधी। बसइ जासु उर सदा अबाधी॥३॥
तेहि बिलोकि माया सकुचाई। करि न सकइ कछु निज प्रभुताई॥
अस बिचारि जे मुनि बिग्यानी। जाचहिं भगति सकल सुख खानी॥४॥

Here I do not speak in a partisan spirit, but merely state the view of the Vedas and Purāṇas as well as of the saints. A woman is never enamoured of another woman's beauty: this, O enemy of the serpents, is a strange phenomenon. Māyā and Bhakti (Devotion), mark me, both belong to the feminine group, as everyone knows. Again, Bhakti is beloved of Srī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line); while poor Māyā is a mere dancing girl. The Lord of the Raghus is well-disposed towards Bhakti; hence Māyā is terribly afraid of her. Nay, Māyā shrinks at the very sight of the man in whose heart ever abides unobstructed the peerless and guileless spirit of Devotion, and cannot wield her authority over him. Knowing this, sages who have realized the Truth solicit Bhakti, which is the fountain of all blessings. (1—4)

दो०—यह रहस्य रघुनाथ कर बेगि न जानइ कोइ।
जो जानइ रघुपति कृपाँ सपनेहुँ मोह न होइ॥११६(क)॥
औरउ ग्यान भगति कर भेद सुनहु सुप्रबीन।
जो सुनि होइ राम पद प्रीति सदा अबिछीन॥११६(ख)॥

No one can speedily know this secret of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus); but whoever comes to know it by the grace of Raghupati Himself can never fall a prey to infatuation even in a dream. Further hear, most sagacious Garuḍa, the distinction between Gnosis and Devotion, by hearing which one develops perpetual and uninterrupted love for Srī Rāma's feet. (116 A-B)

चौ०—सुनहु तात यह अकथ कहानी। समुझत बनइ न जाइ बखानी॥
ईस्वर अंस जीव अबिनासी। चेतन अमल सहज सुख रासी॥१॥
सो मायाबस भयउ गोसाईं। बँध्यो कीर मरकट की नाईं॥
जड़ चेतनहि ग्रंथि परि गई। जदपि मृषा छूटत कठिनई॥२॥
तब ते जीव भयउ संसारी। छूट न ग्रंथि न होइ सुखारी॥
श्रुति पुरान बहु कहेउ उपाई। छूट न अधिक अधिक अरुझाई॥३॥

जीव हृदयँ तम मोह बिसेषी । ग्रंथि छूट किमि परइ न देखी ॥
अस संजोग ईस जब करई । तबहुँ कदाचित सो निरुअरई ॥ ४ ॥
सात्त्विक श्रद्धा धेनु सुहाई । जौं हरि कृपाँ हृदयँ बस आई ॥
जप तप ब्रत जम नियम अपारा । जे श्रुति कह सुभ धर्म अचारा ॥ ५ ॥
तेइ तृन हरित चरै जब गाई । भाव बच्छ सिसु पाइ पेन्हाई ॥
नोइ निबृत्ति पात्र बिस्वासा । निर्मल मन अहीर निज दासा ॥ ६ ॥
परम धर्ममय पय दुहि भाई । अवटै अनल अकाम बनाई ॥
तोष मरुत तब छमाँ जुड़ावै । धृति सम जावनु देइ जमावै ॥ ७ ॥
मुदिताँ मथै बिचार मथानी । दम अधार रजु सत्य सुबानी ॥
तब मथि काढ़ि लेइ नवनीता । बिमल बिराग सुभग सुपुनीता ॥ ८ ॥

Listen, dear Garuḍa, to this unutterable romance, which can only be comprehended by the mind but is incapable of expression. The soul is a particle of the Divinity, immortal, conscious, untainted by Māyā and blissful by nature. Such a soul, my lord, has allowed itself to be dominated by Māyā and has been caught in its own trap like a parrot or a monkey*. Matter and Spirit have been linked together with a knot which, though imaginary, is difficult to untie. Since then the soul has become worldly: it can have no happiness till this knot is untied. The Vedas and Purāṇas have suggested a number of devices for untying the knot; but the knot, far from being resolved, becomes harder and harder. The interior of the soul being utterly clouded with the darkness of ignorance, the knot cannot even be perceived; how, then, can it be untied? If God were to bring about such conditions (as are depicted below), even then the disentanglement of the knot is problematical. Suppose by the grace of Śrī Hari the blessed cow in the shape of Sattvic (genuine) piety comes to abide in one's heart and feeds on green herbage in the shape of Japa (muttering of prayers), austere penance, sacred observances, the Yamas or forms of self-restraint (viz., continence, veracity, non-violence, non-stealing and non-possession), the five Niyamas or positive virtues (viz., external and internal purity, contentment, self-study, self discipline and self-surrender to God) and innumerable other blessed virtues and religious practices recommended by the Vedas. Milk begins to flow from her teats, let us hope, when she is united with her newly-born calf in the form of love. Quietism serves as the cord by which her hind legs are tied (in order to milk her); faith represents the pot in which the cow is milked; while a pure mind, which is at one's beck and call, plays the role of a milker. Having thus drawn the milk in the shape of supreme righteousness one should boil it, brother, on the fire of desirelessness. When boiled, it should be cooled down with the breath of contentment and

* The allusion is to two popular modes of catching parrots and monkeys. A stick with a bait at the end and a string attached to it is so set in the ground that it revolves from the weight of the parrot when it lights upon it; and the bird, confused by the motion, fancies it is entangled in the string, though it is really loose and might fly away if it tried. For the monkey a large jar, with a narrow mouth, is sunk in the ground full of grain. The monkey puts in his hand and clutches a handful; but being unable to draw out his closed fist on account of the smallness of the jar's mouth, he fancies himself caught, though if he stretches the palm of his hand he could extricate it immediately.

forbearance and congealed by mixing with it a little curd in the shape of fortitude and mind-control. The curd thus made should be churned in the earthen vase of cheerfulness with the churning-stick of reflection after fastening the stick to the post of self-restraint with the cord of truthful and agreeable words; and by this process of churning one should extract the pure, excellent and holy butter of dispassion. (1—8)

दो०—जोग अगिनि करि प्रगट तब कर्म सुभासुभ लाइ।
बुद्धि सिरावै ग्यान घृत ममता मल जरि जाइ॥ ११७ (क)॥
तब बिग्यानरूपिनी बुद्धि बिसद घृत पाइ।
चित्त दिआ भरि धरै दृढ़ समता दिअटि बनाइ॥ ११७ (ख)॥
तीनि अवस्था तीनि गुन तेहि कपास तें काढ़ि।
तूल तुरीय सँवारि पुनि बाती करै सुगाढ़ि॥ ११७ (ग)॥
सो०—एहि बिधि लेसै दीप तेज रासि बिग्यानमय।
जातहिं जासु समीप जरहिं मदादिक सलभ सब॥ ११७ (घ)॥

After kindling the fire of Yoga (concentration of mind) one's past Karma, both good and evil, should be consigned to it as fuel, and the butter placed on it. When the scum in the form of worldly attachment is burnt, the ghee (clarified butter) that is left in the form of Gnosis should be cooled down by Buddhi (Reason). Having obtained this pure ghee (in the form of wisdom), Buddhi, which is of the nature of understanding, should fill with it the lamp of the Chitta (reasoning faculty), and making a stand of even-mindedness set the lamp securely there. Extracting cotton in the form of the transcendental state out of the boll of the three states of consciousness (viz., waking, dream and dreamless sleep) and the three modes of Prakṛti (viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) the same should be carded and fashioned into a strong wick. In this manner one should light the glorious lamp of immediate knowledge, by merely approaching which moths in the shape of vanity etc. are all consumed. (117 A—D)

चौ०—सोहमस्मि इति बृत्ति अखंडा। दीप सिखा सोइ परम प्रचंडा॥
आतम अनुभव सुख सुप्रकासा। तब भव मूल भेद भ्रम नासा॥ १॥
प्रबल अबिद्या कर परिवारा। मोह आदि तम मिटइ अपारा॥
तब सोइ बुद्धि पाइ उँजिआरा। उर गृहँ बैठि ग्रंथि निरुआरा॥ २॥
छोरन ग्रंथि पाव जौं सोई। तब यह जीव कृतारथ होई॥
छोरत ग्रंथि जानि खगराया। बिघ्न अनेक करइ तब माया॥ ३॥
रिद्धि सिद्धि प्रेरइ बहु भाई। बुद्धिहि लोभ दिखावहिं आई॥
कल बल छल करि जाहिं समीपा। अंचल बात बुझावहिं दीपा॥ ४॥
होइ बुद्धि जौं परम सयानी। तिन्ह तन चितव न अनहित जानी॥
जौं तेहि बिघ्न बुद्धि नहिं बाधी। तौ बहोरि सुर करहिं उपाधी॥ ५॥
इंद्री द्वार झरोखा नाना। तहँ तहँ सुर बैठे करि थाना॥
आवत देखहिं बिषय बयारी। ते हठि देहिं कपाट उघारी॥ ६॥

जब सो प्रभंजन उर गृहँ जाई। तबहिं दीप बिग्यान बुझाई ॥
ग्रंथि न छूटि मिटा सो प्रकासा। बुद्धि बिकल भइ बिषय बतासा ॥ ७ ॥
इंद्रिन्ह सुरन्ह न ग्यान सोहाई। बिषय भोग पर प्रीति सदाई ॥
बिषय समीर बुद्धि कृत भोरी। तेहि बिधि दीप को बार बहोरी ॥ ८ ॥

The constant awareness that "I am the same (Brahma)" represents the most dazzling flame of the lamp. In this way when the bliss of Self-Realization sheds its bright lustre, the error of duality, the root of worldly existence, is dispersed and the infinite darkness of infatuation etc.,—which forms the family of Avidyā (Nescience)—disappears. Having thus procured a light, the Buddhi referred to above sits in the chamber of the heart to untie the ligature (that binds the Spirit with Matter). The soul can hope to attain its object only in the event of Buddhi succeeding in untying it. But when Māyā, O king of the birds, finds her attempting to untie the knot, she creates many difficulties. She sends forth, brother, a number of Ṛddhis and Siddhis (riches and supernatural powers in their embodied forms), that try to excite her cupidity. By artifice, force or fraud they approach her and put off the light by fanning it with the end of their garment. If the Buddhi happens to be most sagacious, she refuses even to look at them considering them to be her enemies. If these impediments fail to distract her, the gods next proceed to create trouble. The various appertures of the body that locate the five senses are so many windows in the chamber of the heart, each of which is presided over by a god. Even as they find the gust of sensuality entering the chamber the gods wantonly throw the shutters of these appertures wide open. As soon as the blast penetrates the chamber of the heart the light of immediate knowledge gets extinguished. In this way, while the ligature binding the Spirit with Matter remains untied, the light (of Self-Realization) also disappears and the understanding gets bewildered when buffetted by the blast of sensuality. Gnosis is welcome neither to the senses nor the gods presiding over them, who are ever fond of sensuous enjoyments. And the Buddhi too having been distracted by the blast of sensuality, who can light the lamp again as before ?
(1—8)

दो०—तब फिरि जीव बिबिधि बिधि पावइ संसृति क्लेस।
हरि माया अति दुस्तर तरि न जाइ बिहगेस ॥ ११८ (क) ॥
कहत कठिन समुझत कठिन साधत कठिन बिबेक।
होइ घुनाच्छर न्याय जौं पुनि प्रत्यूह अनेक ॥ ११८ (ख) ॥

(When the light of wisdom is thus extinguished) the soul then goes again through the manifold agonies of transmigration. Srī Hari's deluding potency, O lord of the winged creatures, is most difficult to cross: it cannot easily be crossed over. Gnosis is difficult to expound, difficult to grasp and difficult to achieve through practice. And if by chance one succeeds in attaining it, there are many impediments in the way of preserving it.
(118 A-B)

चौ०—ग्यान पंथ कृपान कै धारा। परत खगेस होइ नहिं बारा ॥
जो निर्बिघ्न पंथ निर्बहई। सो कैवल्य परम पद लहई ॥ १ ॥

अति दुर्लभ कैवल्य परम पद । संत पुरान निगम आगम बद ॥
राम भजत सोइ मुकुति गोसाईं । अनइच्छित आवइ बरिआईं ॥ २ ॥
जिमि थल बिनु जल रहि न सकाई । कोटि भाँति कोउ करै उपाई ॥
तथा मोच्छ सुख सुनु खगराई । रहि न सकइ हरि भगति बिहाई ॥ ३ ॥
अस बिचारि हरि भगत सयाने । मुक्ति निरादर भगति लुभाने ॥
भगति करत बिनु जतन प्रयासा । संसृति मूल अबिद्या नासा ॥ ४ ॥
भोजन करिअ तृपिति हित लागी । जिमि सो असन पचवै जठरागी ॥
असि हरि भगति सुगम सुखदाई । को अस मूढ़ न जाहि सोहाई ॥ ५ ॥

The path of wisdom is like the edge of a sword: one is apt to fall from it very soon, O king of the birds. He alone who successfully treads it attains to the supreme state of final emancipation. But this supreme state of final beatitude is most difficult to attain, so declare the saints as well as the Puranas Vedas and Agamas (Tantras). By worshipping Śrī Rāma, my lord, the same beatitude comes unsolicited even against our will. Water cannot stay except on land notwithstanding our best efforts; even so, mark you, O king of the birds, the joy of final beatitude cannot stay apart from Devotion to Srī Hari. Realizing this, the wise devotees of Śrī Hari spurn final emancipation and remain enamoured of Devotion. By practising Devotion ignorance, which is the root of metempsychosis, is eradicated without any effort or exertion, in the same way as we eat for our own gratification but the gastric fire digests the food so eaten (without any effort on our part). What fool is there who does not welcome such Devotion to Srī Hari, which is so easy and delightful at the same time? (1—5)

दो०—सेवक सेब्य भाव बिनु भव न तरिअ उरगारि ।
भजहु राम पद पंकज अस सिद्धांत बिचारि ॥ ११९ (क) ॥
जो चेतन कहँ जड़ करइ जड़हि करइ चैतन्य ।
अस समर्थ रघुनायकहि भजहिं जीव ते धन्य ॥ ११९ (ख) ॥

The ocean of transmigration, O enemy of serpents, cannot be crossed without cultivating the same feeling to Srī Rāma as a servant cherishes towards his master. Knowing this to be the established doctrine, adore the lotus feet of Srī Rāma. The Lord of the Raghus can make the animate inanimate and the inanimate animate: the souls that adore such an omnipotent lord are blessed indeed. (119 A-B)

चौ०—कहेउँ ग्यान सिद्धांत बुझाई । सुनहु भगति मनि कै प्रभुताई ॥
राम भगति चिंतामनि सुंदर । बसइ गरुड़ जाके उर अंतर ॥ १ ॥
परम प्रकास रूप दिन राती । नहिं कछु चहिअ दिआ घृत बाती ॥
मोह दरिद्र निकट नहिं आवा । लोभ बात नहिं ताहि बुझावा ॥ २ ॥
प्रबल अबिद्या तम मिटि जाई । हारहिं सकल सलभ समुदाई ॥
खल कामादि निकट नहिं जाहीं । बसइ भगति जाके उर माहीं ॥ ३ ॥
गरल सुधासम अरि हित होई । तेहि मनि बिनु सुख पाव न कोई ॥
ब्यापहिं मानस रोग न भारी । जिन्ह के बस सब जीव दुखारी ॥ ४ ॥

राम भगति मनि उर बस जाकें । दुख लवलेस न सपनेहुँ ताकें ॥
चतुर सिरोमनि तेइ जग माहीं । जे मनि लागि सुजतन कराहीं ॥ ५ ॥
सो मनि जदपि प्रगट जग अहई । राम कृपा बिनु नहिं कोउ लहई ॥
सुगम उपाय पाइबे केरे । नर हतभाग्य देहिं भटभेरे ॥ ६ ॥
पावन पर्बत बेद पुराना । राम कथा रुचिराकर नाना ॥
मर्मी सज्जन सुमति कुदारी । ग्यान बिराग नयन उरगारी ॥ ७ ॥
भाव सहित खोजइ जो प्रानी । पाव भगति मनि सब सुख खानी ॥
मोरें मन प्रभु अस बिस्वासा । राम ते अधिक राम कर दासा ॥ ८ ॥
राम सिंधु घन सज्जन धीरा । चंदन तरु हरि संत समीरा ॥
सब कर फल हरि भगति सुहाई । सो बिनु संत न काहूँ पाई ॥ ९ ॥
अस बिचारि जोइ कर सतसंगा । राम भगति तेहि सुलभ बिहंगा ॥ १० ॥

I have expounded at length the established doctrine relating to Gnosis; hear now the virtue of Devotion, which has been likened to a jewel. The beautiful wish-yielding gem of Devotion to Śrī Rāma is an embodiment of supreme effulgence, which sheds its radiance day and night, requiring neither a vessel nor clarified butter nor a wick (to light it). He in whose heart, O Garuda, such a jewel abides is not haunted by poverty in the shape of infatuation. No blast of greed can ever extinguish this light, which dispels the overpowering gloom of ignorance and the swarms of moths (in the shape of vanity etc.) keep away from it in a mood of frustration. Nay, vicious propensities like lust dare not approach him in whose heart the gem of Devotion abides. For him venom is transformed into ambrosia and enemies turn into friends; nobody can attain happiness without this jewel. Again, he is never attacked by the terrible mental diseases from which all living beings are grievously suffering. He in whose heart the gem of Devotion to Śrī Rāma abides cannot have the least woe even in a dream. They alone are paragons of wisdom in this world, who spare no pains to secure this gem. Although this jewel is manifest in the world, none can find it without the grace of Śrī Rāma. There are easy devices for finding it, but luckless souls attempt harder methods. The Vedas and Purāṇas represent holy mountains; and the stories of Śrī Rāma, the many glorious mines located in their midst. The saints are the expert minerologists and their penetrating intellect, the pickaxe; while spiritual wisdom and dispassion, Garuḍa, are the two eyes (surveying the mines). Any creature who looks for it with faith succeeds in discovering the gem of Devotion, a mine of all blessings. I have this conviction in my heart, my lord, that a servant of Śrī Rāma is greater than Śrī Rāma Himself. While Śrī Rāma is the ocean, the wise saints are like the rain-clouds; or (to use another metaphor) while Śrī Hari is the sandal-tree, the saints represent the winds (that diffuse its perfume). Devotion to Śrī Hari, which is so delightful, is the reward of all spiritual endeavours; none has ever secured it except through a saint. Realizing this whoever cultivates the fellowship of saints finds Devotion to Śrī Rāma easy of attainment, O king of the birds. (1–10)

दो०—ब्रह्म पयोनिधि मंदर ग्यान संत सुर आहिं ।
कथा सुधा मथि काढ़हिं भगति मधुरता जाहिं ॥ १२० (क) ॥

बिरति चर्म असि ग्यान मद लोभ मोह रिपु मारि ।
जय पाइअ सो हरि भगति देखु खगेस बिचारि ॥ १२० (ख) ॥

The Vedas are compared to the ocean (of milk); spiritual wisdom plays the role of Mount Mandara; while saints are the gods who churn out nectar in the form of the sacred legends; and Devotion represents its sweetness. Using Dispassion as a shield (for self-defence) and slaying with the sword of wisdom enemies in the form of vanity, greed and infatuation, it is Devotion to Śrī Hari that truimphs: ponder and realize this, O king of the birds. (120 A-B)

चौ०—पुनि सप्रेम बोलेउ खगराऊ । जौं कृपाल मोहि ऊपर भाऊ ॥
नाथ मोहि निज सेवक जानी । सप्त प्रस्न मम कहहु बखानी ॥ १ ॥
प्रथमहिं कहहु नाथ मतिधीरा । सब ते दुर्लभ कवन सरीरा ॥
बड़ दुख कवन कवन सुख भारी । सोउ संछेपहिं कहहु बिचारी ॥ २ ॥
संत असंत मरम तुम्ह जानहु । तिन्ह कर सहज सुभाव बखानहु ॥
कवन पुन्य श्रुति बिदित बिसाला । कहहु कवन अघ परम कराला ॥ ३ ॥
मानस रोग कहहु समुझाई । तुम्ह सर्बग्य कृपा अधिकाई ॥
तात सुनहु सादर अति प्रीती । मैं संछेप कहउँ यह नीती ॥ ४ ॥
नर तन सम नहिं कवनिउ देही । जीव चराचर जाचत तेही ॥
नरक स्वर्ग अपबर्ग निसेनी । ग्यान बिराग भगति सुभ देनी ॥ ५ ॥
सो तनु धरि हरि भजहिं न जे नर । होहिं बिषय रत मंद मंद तर ॥
काँच किरिच बदलें ते लेहीं । कर ते डारि परस मनि देहीं ॥ ६ ॥
नहिं दरिद्र सम दुख जग माहीं । संत मिलन सम सुख जग नाहीं ॥
पर उपकार बचन मन काया । संत सहज सुभाउ खगराया ॥ ७ ॥
संत सहहिं दुख पर हित लागी । पर दुख हेतु असंत अभागी ॥
भूर्ज तरू सम संत कृपाला । पर हित निति सह बिपति बिसाला ॥ ८ ॥
सन इव खल पर बंधन करई । खाल कढ़ाइ बिपति सहि मरई ॥
खल बिनु स्वारथ पर अपकारी । अहि मूषक इव सुनु उरगारी ॥ ९ ॥
पर संपदा बिनासि नसाहीं । जिमि ससि हति हिम उपल बिलाहीं ॥
दुष्ट उदय जग आरति हेतू । जथा प्रसिद्ध अधम ग्रह केतू ॥ १० ॥
संत उदय संतत सुखकारी । बिस्व सुखद जिमि इंदु तमारी ॥
परम धर्म श्रुति बिदित अहिंसा । पर निंदा सम अघ न गरीसा ॥ ११ ॥
हर गुर निंदक दादुर होई । जन्म सहस्र पाव तन सोई ॥
द्विज निंदक बहु नरक भोग करि । जग जनमइ बायस सरीर धरि ॥ १२ ॥
सुर श्रुति निंदक जे अभिमानी । रौरव नरक परहिं ते प्रानी ॥
होहिं उलूक संत निंदा रत । मोह निसा प्रिय ग्यान भानु गत ॥ १३ ॥
सब कै निंदा जे जड़ करहीं । ते चमगादुर होइ अवतरहीं ॥
सुनहु तात अब मानस रोगा । जिन्ह ते दुख पावहिं सब लोगा ॥ १४ ॥
मोह सकल ब्याधिन्ह कर मूला । तिन्ह ते पुनि उपजहिं बहु सूला ॥
काम बात कफ लोभ अपारा । क्रोध पित्त नित छाती जारा ॥ १५ ॥

प्रीति करहिं जौं तीनिउ भाई । उपजइ सन्यपात दुखदाई ॥
बिषय मनोरथ दुर्गम नाना । ते सब सूल नाम को जाना ॥ १६ ॥
ममता दादु कंडु इरषाई । हरष बिषाद गरह बहुताई ॥
पर सुख देखि जरनि सोइ छई । कुष्ट दुष्टता मन कुटिलई ॥ १७ ॥
अहंकार अति दुखद डमरुआ । दंभ कपट मद मान नेहरुआ ॥
तृष्ना उदरबृद्धि अति भारी । त्रिबिधि ईषना तरुन तिजारी ॥ १८ ॥
जुग बिधि ज्वर मत्सर अबिबेका । कहँ लगि कहौं कुरोग अनेका ॥ १९ ॥

Garuḍa (the king of the birds) further submitted in loving tones: "If you cherish fondness for me, my gracious master, kindly recognize me as your servant, and answer me the following seven questions. Tell me, first of all, my strong-minded master: which form of all is the most difficult to obtain? Next consider and tell me briefly which is the greatest misery and which again is the highest pleasure. You know the essential characteristics of the saints and the evil-minded; therefore, describe their innate disposition. Also tell me which is the highest religious merit made known in the Vedas and which, again, is the most terrible sin. Further tell me in unambiguous terms the diseases of the mind, omniscient as you are and richly endowed with compassion." "Listen, dear Garuḍa, with reverence and rapt attention while I tell you briefly my views on these questions. There is no other form as good as the human body: every living creature—whether animate or inanimate—craves for it. It is the ladder that takes the soul either to hell or to heaven or again to final beatitude, and is the bestower of blessings in the form of wisdom, dispassion and Devotion. Men who fail to adore Śrī Hari even after obtaining this body, and wallow in the basest pleasures of sense, throw away the philosopher's stone from the palm of their hand and take bits of glass in exchange for the same. There is no misery in this world as terrible as poverty and no blessing as great as communion with saints. Beneficence in thought, word and deed is the innate disposition of saints, O king of the birds. The saints undergo suffering in the interest of others while impious wretches do so with a view to tormenting others. Tender-hearted saints, like the birch tree, submit to the greatest torture (even allow their skin to be peeled off) for the good of others; while the wicked, like the hemp, have their skin flayed off and perish in agony in order to be able to bind others (in the form of cords). Listen, O enemy of serpents: like the rat and the serpent, the wicked injure others without any gain to themselves. Having destroyed others' prosperity they perish themselves, even as the hail dissolves after destroying the crops. The elevation of the wicked, like the rising of a comet—which is a detestable heavenly body,—is a source of calamity to the world. The advancement of a saint, on the other hand, is ever conducive to joy, even as the rising of the sun and the moon brings delight to the whole universe. A vow of non-violence is the highest religious merit known to the Vedas; and there is no sin as grievous as speaking ill of others. A reviler of Lord Hara and his own preceptor takes the form of a frog (after his death) and his birth in that form is repeated a thousand times. A reviler of the Brahmans, after suffering tortures in a number of hells, is born on earth in the form of a crow. Those conceited souls who revile the gods and the Vedas are cast into the hell known as Raurava. They who delight

in vilifying the saints are reborn as owls, who love the night of error and for whom the sun of wisdom has set. The fools who censure all are reborn as bats. Note now, dear Garuḍa, the diseases of the mind, from which everyone suffers. Infatuation is the root of all ailments and from these again arise many other troubles. Lust is a counterpart of wind and inordinate greed corresponds to an abundance of phlegm; while anger represents bile, which constantly burns the breast. Should all these three combine, there results what is known as Sannipāta (a derangement of the aforesaid three humours of the body, causing fever which is of a dangerous type). The cravings for the manifold pleasures of the sense, so difficult to realize, are the various distempers, which are too numerous to name. The feeling of mineness corresponds to ringworms, envy represents itches, while joy and grief correspond to a disease of the throat marked by an excessive enlargement of its glands. Grudging contemplation of others' happiness represents consumption; while wickedness and perversity of soul correspond to leprosy. Egotism is a counterpart of the most painful gout; while hypocrisy, deceit, arrogance and pride correspond to the disease known as Dracontiasis (which is marked by the presence in the body of a parasite known as the guinea-worm). Thirst for enjoyment represents the most advanced type of dropsy; while the three types of craving (those for progeny, riches and honour) correspond to the violent quartan ague. Jealousy and thoughtlessness are the two types of fever. There are many more fell diseases, too numerous to mention. (1—19)

दो०—एक ब्याधि बस नर मरहिं ए असाधि बहु ब्याधि।
पीड़हिं संतत जीव कहुँ सो किमि लहै समाधि ॥ १२१ (क) ॥
नेम धर्म आचार तप ग्यान जग्य जप दान।
भेषज पुनि कोटिन्ह नहिं रोग जाहिं हरिजान ॥ १२१ (ख) ॥

People die even of one disease; while I have spoken of many incurable diseases which constantly torment the soul. How, then, can it find peace ? There are sacred vows and religious observances and practices, austere penance, spiritual wisdom, sacrifices, Japa (muttering of prayers), charity and myriads of other remedies too; but the maladies just enumerated do not yield to these, O mount of Śrī Hari. (121 A-B)

चौ०—एहि बिधि सकल जीव जग रोगी। सोक हरष भय प्रीति बियोगी ॥
मानस रोग कछुक मैं गाए। हहिं सब कें लखि बिरलेन्ह पाए ॥ १ ॥
जाने ते छीजहिं कछु पापी। नास न पावहिं जन परितापी ॥
बिषय कुपथ्य पाइ अंकुरे। मुनिहु हृदयँ का नर बापुरे ॥ २ ॥
राम कृपाँ नासहिं सब रोगा। जौं एहि भाँति बनै संजोगा ॥
सदगुर बैद बचन बिस्वासा। संजम यह न बिषय कै आसा ॥ ३ ॥
रघुपति भगति सजीवन मूरी। अनूपान श्रद्धा मति पूरी ॥
एहि बिधि भलेहिं सो रोग नसाहीं। नाहिं त जतन कोटि नहिं जाहीं ॥ ४ ॥

जानिअ तब मन बिरुज गोसाँई। जब उर बल बिराग अधिकाई ॥
सुमति छुधा बाढ़इ नित नई। बिषय आस दुर्बलता गई ॥ ५ ॥
बिमल ग्यान जल जब सो नहाई। तब रह राम भगति उर छाई ॥
सिव अज सुक सनकादिक नारद। जे मुनि ब्रह्म बिचार बिसारद ॥ ६ ॥
सब कर मत खगनायक एहा। करिअ राम पद पंकज नेहा ॥
श्रुति पुरान सब ग्रंथ कहाहीं। रघुपति भगति बिना सुख नाहीं ॥ ७ ॥
कमठ पीठ जामहिं बरु बारा। बंध्या सुत बरु काहुहि मारा ॥
फूलहिं नभ बरु बहुबिधि फूला। जीव न लह सुख हरि प्रतिकूला ॥ ८ ॥
तृषा जाइ बरु मृगजल पाना। बरु जामहिं सस सीस बिषाना ॥
अंधकारु बरु रबिहि नसावै। राम बिमुख न जीव सुख पावै ॥ ९ ॥
हिम ते अनल प्रगट बरु होई। बिमुख राम सुख पाव न कोई ॥ १० ॥

Thus every creature in this world is ailing and is further afflicted with grief and joy, fear, love and desolation. I have mentioned only a few diseases of the mind; although everyone is suffering from them, few are able to detect them. These wretches, the plague of mankind, diminish to a certain extent on being detected, but are not completely destroyed. Fed by the unwholesome diet of sensuality they sprout even in the mind of sages, to say nothing of poor mortals. All these ailments can no doubt be eradicated if by Śrī Rāma's grace the following factors combine. There must be faith in the words of the physician in the form of a true preceptor; and the regimen is indifference to the pleasures of sense. Devotion to the Lord of the Raghus is the life-giving herb (to be used as a recipe); while a devout mind serves as the vehicle in which it is taken. By this process the ailments can certainly be eradicated; otherwise all our efforts will fail to get rid of them. The mind should be accounted as cured, my lord, only when the heart gathers strength in the form of dispassion, appetite in the shape of good resolutions grows stronger and stronger every day and weakness in the form of sensual appetite goes. (Being thus rid of all diseases) when the soul bathes in the pure water of wisdom, the heart is saturated with Devotion to Śrī Rāma. Lord Śiva, Brahmā (the Unborn), Sanaka and his three brothers, Nārada and other sages who are adept in the investigation of Brahma, all are of this opinion, O lord of the winged creatures, that one should cultivate devotion to the lotus feet of Śrī Rāma. The Vedas and Purāṇas and all other scriptures declare that there can be no happiness without practising devotion to the Lord of the Raghus. It would be easier for the hair to grow on the shell of a tortoise, or for the progeny of a barren woman to slay anyone or for flowers of every description to appear in the air than for any creature to be happy even though hostile to Śrī Hari. Sooner shall thirst be slaked by drinking of a mirage or horns sprout on a hare's head or darkness efface the sun than a creature who has turned his face against Śrī Rāma find happiness. Sooner shall fire appear out of ice than an enemy of Śrī Rāma enjoy happiness. (1—10)

दो०—बारि मथें घृत होइ बरु सिकता ते बरु तेल।
बिनु हरि भजन न भव तरिअ यह सिद्धांत अपेल ॥ १२२ (क) ॥

मसकहि करइ बिरंचि प्रभु अजहि मसक ते हीन।
अस बिचारि तजि संसय रामहि भजहिं प्रबीन ॥ १२२ (ख) ॥

Sooner shall butter be churned out of water or oil be extracted from sand than the ocean of worldly existence be crossed without adoring Śrī Hari: this is a conclusion which cannot be set aside. The Lord can exalt a mosquito to the position of Brahmā (the Creator) and degrade Brahmā to a position lower than that of a mosquito. Realizing this, the wise discard all doubt and worship Śrī Rāma. (122 A.B)

श्लोक—विनिश्चितं वदामि ते न अन्यथा वचांसि मे।
हरिं नरा भजन्ति येऽतिदुस्तरं तरन्ति ते ॥ १२२ (ग) ॥

I tell you my considered view and my words can never be untrue: men who worship Śrī Rāma are able to cross the most turbulent ocean of mundane existence. (122 C)

चौ०—कहेउँ नाथ हरि चरित अनूपा। ब्यास समास स्वमति अनुरूपा ॥
श्रुति सिद्धांत इहइ उरगारी। राम भजिअ सब काज बिसारी ॥ १ ॥
प्रभु रघुपति तजि सेइअ काही। मोहि से सठ पर ममता जाही ॥
तुम्ह बिग्यानरूप नहिं मोहा। नाथ कीन्हि मो पर अति छोहा ॥ २ ॥
पूँछिहु राम कथा अति पावनि। सुक सनकादि संभु मन भावनि ॥
सत संगति दुर्लभ संसारा। निमिष दंड भरि एकउ बारा ॥ ३ ॥
देखु गरुड़ निज हृदयँ बिचारी। मैं रघुबीर भजन अधिकारी ॥
सकुनाधम सब भाँति अपावन। प्रभु मोहि कीन्ह बिदित जग पावन ॥ ४ ॥

I have narrated, my lord, the incomparable story of Śrī Hari according to my own lights, now briefly and now in detail. The conclusion of the Vedas, O enemy of serpents, is just this: forgetting all other duties Śrī Rāma alone should be adored. Who else is worth serving, if you renounce the almighty Lord of the Raghus, who regards even a fool like me as His own. You are wisdom incarnate and have no infatuation; on the other hand, you have done me a unique favour, my lord, in that you asked me to repeat the most sacred story of Śrī Rāma, which delights the soul of sages like Śuka, Sanaka and others, as well as of Lord Śambhu. The fellowship of saints is difficult to get in this world, be it for the twinkling of an eye or for half an hour even for once. Ponder in your heart, Garuḍa, and see for yourself whether I am competent in any way to worship the Hero of Raghu's line. The vilest of birds and impure in every way as I was, the Lord has made me known as a purifier of the world. (1—4.)

दो०—आजु धन्य मैं धन्य अति जद्यपि सब बिधि हीन।
निज जन जानि राम मोहि संत समागम दीन ॥ १२३ (क) ॥
नाथ जथामति भाषेउँ राखेउँ नहिं कछु गोइ।
चरित सिंधु रघुनायक थाह कि पावइ कोइ ॥ १२३ (ख) ॥

Though vile in every way, I am blessed, most blessed today, in that Śrī Rāma has acknowledged me as one of His own servants and therefore vouchsafed to me the fellowship of a saint (like you). My lord, I have spoken to the best of my ability and have concealed nothing. But the story of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) is vast as an ocean: can anyone find the bottom of it? (123 A-B)

चौ०—सुमिरि राम के गुन गन नाना । पुनि पुनि हरष भुसुंडि सुजाना ॥
महिमा निगम नेति करि गाई । अतुलित बल प्रताप प्रभुताई ॥ १ ॥
सिव अज पूज्य चरन रघुराई । मो पर कृपा परम मृदुलाई ॥
अस सुभाउ कहुँ सुनउँ न देखउँ । केहि खगेस रघुपति सम लेखउँ ॥ २ ॥
साधक सिद्ध बिमुक्त उदासी । कबि कोबिद कृतग्य संन्यासी ॥
जोगी सूर सुतापस ग्यानी । धर्म निरत पंडित बिग्यानी ॥ ३ ॥
तरहिं न बिनु सेएँ मम स्वामी । राम नमामि नमामि नमामी ॥
सरन गएँ मो से अघ रासी । होहिं सुद्ध नमामि अबिनासी ॥ ४ ॥

The wise Kākabhuśuṇḍi rejoiced again and again as he pondered Śrī Rāma's manifold virtues. That I should enjoy the grace of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus), whose glory is sung by the Vedas only in negative terms as "not that," whose might, majesty and glory are unequalled and whose feet are worthy of adoration even to Lord Śiva and Brahmā (the Unborn Creator),—betrays His supreme tenderness of heart. Nowhere have I heard of, much less seen, such a kind disposition: to whom shall I compare the Lord of the Raghus, O chief of the birds? Strivers and perfect souls, the liberated and the unworldly-minded, the seers and learned men, those knowing the secrets of Karma (duty) and those who have renounced all action, Yogīs (mystics) and valiant heroes, great ascetics and wise men, pious souls and men of erudition and even men who have realized the Self—none of these can cross the ocean of mundane existence without adoring my lord, Śrī Rāma, to whom I bow again and again and yet again. I bow once more to that imperishable Lord by approaching whom for shelter even sinful souls like me get purified. (1—4)

दो०—जासु नाम भव भेषज हरन घोर त्रय सूल ।
सो कृपाल मोहि तो पर सदा रहउ अनुकूल ॥ १२४ (क) ॥
सुनि भुसुंडि के बचन सुभ देखि राम पद नेह ।
बोलेउ प्रेम सहित गिरा गरुड़ बिगत संदेह ॥ १२४ (ख) ॥

He whose name is an unfailing remedy for the disease of birth and death and alleviates the three kinds of terrible pain,—may that gracious Lord remain propitious both to me and to you." On hearing Bhuśuṇḍi's blessed discourse and perceiving his devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet, Garuḍa, who was now rid of all doubt, replied in endearing terms:— (124 A-B)

चौ०—मैं कृतकृत्य भयउँ तव बानी । सुनि रघुबीर भगति रस सानी ॥
राम चरन नूतन रति भई । माया जनित बिपति सब गई ॥ १ ॥

मोह जलधि बोहित तुम्ह भए। मो कहँ नाथ बिबिध सुख दए॥
मो पहिं होइ न प्रति उपकारा। बंदउँ तव पद बारहिं बारा॥ २॥
पूरन काम राम अनुरागी। तुम्ह सम तात न कोउ बड़भागी॥
संत बिटप सरिता गिरि धरनी। पर हित हेतु सबन्ह कै करनी॥ ३॥
संत हृदय नवनीत समाना। कहा कबिन्ह परि कहै न जाना॥
निज परिताप द्रवइ नवनीता। पर दुख द्रवहिं संत सुपुनीता॥ ४॥
जीवन जन्म सुफल मम भयऊ। तव प्रसाद संसय सब गयऊ॥
जानेहु सदा मोहि निज किंकर। पुनि पुनि उमा कहइ बिहंगबर॥ ५॥

"I have attained the object of my life now that I have listened to your discourse, imbued with the nectar of Devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet. My love for Śrī Rāma's feet has been renewed and the trouble created by Māyā (the Lord's deluding potency) has all ended. You have been a vessel to me, drifting as I was in the ocean of infatuation and have afforded me delight in various ways, my lord. I am, however, incapable of repaying my obligation to you and simply adore your feet again and again. You are fully satiated and a lover of Śrī Rāma; no one is so blessed as you, venerable sir. Saints, trees, rivers, mountains and the earth, all these operate for the good of others. The poets have declared the heart of a saint to be soft as butter; but they did not know what should be said. For, while butter melts only when the same is heated on fire, the holy saints melt at the suffering of others. My life and birth into this world have both been rewarded and by your grace all my doubts have fled. Ever regard me as your own servant." Again and again did the chief of the birds speak thus, O Umā. (1—5)

दो०—तासु चरन सिरु नाइ करि प्रेम सहित मतिधीर।
गयउ गरुड़ बैकुंठ तब हृदयँ राखि रघुबीर॥ १२५ (क)॥
गिरिजा संत समागम सम न लाभ कछु आन।
बिनु हरि कृपा न होइ सो गावहिं बेद पुरान॥ १२५ (ख)॥

Lovingly bowing his head at Kākabhuśuṇḍi's feet, Garuḍa, who was so resolute of purpose, then flew away to Vaikuṇṭha (the divine abode of Lord Viṣṇu), with an image of Śrī Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line) imprinted on his heart. Girijā, there is no gain so valuable as the fellowship of saints; the same, however, cannot be had without the grace of Śrī Hari: so declare the Vedas and Purāṇas. (125 A-B)

चौ०—कहेउँ परम पुनीत इतिहासा। सुनत श्रवन छूटहिं भव पासा॥
प्रनत कल्पतरु करुना पुंजा। उपजइ प्रीति राम पद कंजा॥ १॥
मन क्रम बचन जनित अघ जाई। सुनहिं जे कथा श्रवन मन लाई॥
तीर्थाटन साधन समुदाई। जोग बिराग ग्यान निपुनाई॥ २॥
नाना कर्म धर्म ब्रत दाना। संजम दम जप तप मख नाना॥
भूत दया द्विज गुर सेवकाई। बिद्या बिनय बिबेक बड़ाई॥ ३॥

जहँ लगि साधन बेद बखानी । सब कर फल हरि भगति भवानी ॥
सो रघुनाथ भगति श्रुति गाई । राम कृपाँ काहूँ एक पाई ॥ ४ ॥

I have thus repeated the most sacred narrative, by hearing which one is freed from the bonds of worldly existence and comes to have devotion to the lotus feet of the All-merciful Śrī Rāma, who is a wish-yielding tree to the suppliant. Again, they who listen to this narrative attentively are absolved of sins committed with the mind, speech or body. Pilgrimages to sacred places and other means of self-purification, perfection in Yoga (mind-control), dispassion and wisdom, sacred rites and religious practices, vows and charitable acts of various kinds, self-denial and self-control, Japa (muttering of prayers) and austere penance, performing manifold sacrifices, compassion to all living beings, ministering to the Brahmans and one's preceptor, learning, modesty, right judgment and nobility of mind and character, in short, all the expedients extolled in the Vedas, Bhavānī, have but one reward—Devotion to Śrī Hari. Such devotion to the Lord of the Raghus as has been glorified in the Vedas is attained to by some rare soul by the grace of Śrī Rāma Himself. (1—4)

दो०—मुनि दुर्लभ हरि भगति नर पावहिं बिनहिं प्रयास ।
जे यह कथा निरंतर सुनहिं मानि बिस्वास ॥ १२६ ॥

Although such devotion to Śrī Hari is scarce attainable even by the sages, it can be easily attained by men who constantly listen to this story with faith. (126)

चौ०—सोइ सर्बग्य गुनी सोइ ग्याता । सोइ महि मंडित पंडित दाता ॥
धर्म परायन सोइ कुल त्राता । राम चरन जा कर मन राता ॥ १ ॥
नीति निपुन सोइ परम सयाना । श्रुति सिद्धांत नीक तेहिं जाना ॥
सोइ कबि कोबिद सोइ रनधीरा । जो छल छाड़ि भजइ रघुबीरा ॥ २ ॥
धन्य देस सो जहँ सुरसरी । धन्य नारि पतिब्रत अनुसरी ॥
धन्य सो भूपु नीति जो करई । धन्य सो द्विज निज धर्म न टरई ॥ ३ ॥
सो धन धन्य प्रथम गति जाकी । धन्य पुन्य रत मति सोइ पाकी ॥
धन्य घरी सोइ जब सतसंगा । धन्य जन्म द्विज भगति अभंगा ॥ ४ ॥

He alone is omniscient and accomplished, he alone is wise, he alone is an ornament of the globe, learned and munificent, he alone is pious and he the saviour of his race, whose mind is devoted to the feet of Śrī Rāma. He alone is perfect in correct behaviour and most sagacious, he alone has thoroughly grasped the conclusion of the Vedas, and he alone is a seer, a man of erudition and staunch in battle, who adores the Hero of Raghu's line in a guileless spirit. Blessed is the land where flows the celestial stream (the Gangā); blessed the wife who observes a vow of fidelity to her husband. Blessed is the monarch who administers justice; blessed the Brahman who swerves not from his duty. Blessed is the wealth which is used to the best advantage*; blessed is the intellect and ripe too, which is

* Wealth invariably meets with one of the following three fates: it is either devoted to some charitable purpose, squandered away on luxury and enjoyment or lost. Evidently the first of these is the best use of it. The wealth of the miser who neither devotes it to the service of the needy, nor spends it on his own comforts meets with the third, which is the worst fate.

devoted to pious acts. Blessed is the hour which is spent in communion with saints; blessed the birth in which one practises unceasing devotion to the twice-born (the Brahmans). (1—4)

दो०—सो कुल धन्य उमा सुनु जगत पूज्य सुपुनीत ।
श्रीरघुबीर परायन जेहिं नर उपज बिनीत ॥ १२७ ॥

Listen, Umā: blessed is the family, worthy of adoration for the whole world and most hallowed too, in which is born an humble devotee of the illustrious Rāma (the Hero of Raghu's line). (127)

चौ०—मति अनुरूप कथा मैं भाषी । जद्यपि प्रथम गुप्त करि राखी ॥
तव मन प्रीति देखि अधिकाई । तब मैं रघुपति कथा सुनाई ॥ १ ॥
यह न कहिअ सठही हठसीलहि । जो मन लाइ न सुन हरि लीलहि ॥
कहिअ न लोभिहि क्रोधिहि कामिहि । जो न भजइ सचराचर स्वामिहि ॥ २ ॥
द्विज द्रोहिहि न सुनाइअ कबहूँ । सुरपति सरिस होइ नृप जबहूँ ॥
राम कथा के तेइ अधिकारी । जिन्ह कें सत संगति अति प्यारी ॥ ३ ॥
गुर पद प्रीति नीति रत जेई । द्विज सेवक अधिकारी तेई ॥
ता कहँ यह बिसेष सुखदाई । जाहि प्रानप्रिय श्रीरघुराई ॥ ४ ॥

I have told you this narrative according to my own lights, although at first I kept it secret. I saw excessive fondness for the same in your heart and then I narrated to you the story of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). This story, however, should not be repeated to a perverse knave, who does not listen attentively to the story of Śrī Hari; nor should it be recited to a greedy, irascible or lustful man who worships not the Lord of all animate and inanimate creation. It should never be repeated to a Brahman-hater, be he a monarch as great as Indra (the lord of the celestials). They alone are qualified to hear Śrī Rāma's narrative, who are extremely fond of communion with holy men. They alone are fit to hear it, who are devoted to the feet of their preceptor, and are lovers of propriety and votaries of the Brahmans. The story affords special delight to them who hold the graceful Lord of the Raghus dear as life. (1—4)

दो०—राम चरन रति जो चह अथवा पद निर्बान ।
भाव सहित सो यह कथा करउ श्रवन पुट पान ॥ १२८ ॥

He who seeks devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma or to enjoy the state of eternal bliss should fondly drink in this story with the cups of his ears. (128)

चौ०—राम कथा गिरिजा मैं बरनी । कलि मल समनि मनोमल हरनी ॥
संसृति रोग सजीवन मूरी । राम कथा गावहिं श्रुति सूरी ॥ १ ॥
एहि महँ रुचिर सप्त सोपाना । रघुपति भगति केर पंथाना ॥
अति हरि कृपा जाहि पर होई । पाउँ देइ एहिं मारग सोई ॥ २ ॥

मन कामना सिद्धि नर पावा। जे यह कथा कपट तजि गावा॥
कहहिं सुनहिं अनुमोदन करहीं। ते गोपद इव भवनिधि तरहीं॥ ३॥
सुनि सब कथा हृदय अति भाई। गिरिजा बोली गिरा सुहाई॥
नाथ कृपाँ मम गत संदेहा। राम चरन उपजेउ नव नेहा॥ ४॥

I have narrated, Girijā, the story of Śrī Rāma, which wipes out the sins of the Kali age and removes the impurities of the mind. The narrative of Śrī Rāma, as is declared by the Vedas and the seers, is a life-giving herb to cure the disease of birth and death. It has seven beautiful stairs, which are so many roads as it were leading to the goal of Devotion to the Lord of the Raghus. He alone who enjoys the utmost grace of Śrī Hari can set his foot on this road (the road to Devotion). Men who sing this story in a guileless spirit attain the object of their soul's desire. Nay, they who repeat or listen to it or even approve of its recitation cross the ocean of mundane existence as they would the print of a cow's hoof. Girijā (Daughter of the mountain-king) was greatly delighted at heart to hear the whole narrative and replied in pleasing tones: "By the grace of my lord (Yourself) my doubts have disappeared and my devotion to Śrī Rāma's feet has been renovated. (1—4)

दो०—मैं कृतकृत्य भइउँ अब तव प्रसाद बिस्वेस।
उपजी राम भगति दृढ़ बीते सकल कलेस॥ १२९॥

"By your blessing, O Lord of the universe, I have now attained the object of my life. Unswerving devotion to Śrī Rāma has sprung in my heart and all my afflictions have ended." (129)

चौ०—यह सुभ संभु उमा संबादा। सुख संपादन समन बिषादा॥
भव भंजन गंजन संदेहा। जन रंजन सज्जन प्रिय एहा॥ १॥
राम उपासक जे जग माहीं। एहि सम प्रिय तिन्ह कें कछु नाहीं॥
रघुपति कृपाँ जथामति गावा। मैं यह पावन चरित सुहावा॥ २॥
एहिं कलिकाल न साधन दूजा। जोग जग्य जप तप ब्रत पूजा॥
रामहि सुमिरिअ गाइअ रामहि। संतत सुनिअ राम गुन ग्रामहि॥ ३॥
जासु पतित पावन बड़ बाना। गावहिं कबि श्रुति संत पुराना॥
ताहि भजहि मन तजि कुटिलाई। राम भजें गति केहिं नहिं पाई॥ ४॥

This blessed dialogue between Lord Śambhu and Goddess Umā begets joy and lifts the gloom of depression. It puts an end to transmigration, disperses doubt, delights the devotees and is dear to the saints. To the worshippers of Śrī Rāma, nothing is so dear as this (narrative of Śrī Rāma). By the grace of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus) Himself I have sung to the best of my ability this sacred and charming story. In this age of Kali no other discipline is of any avail,—neither Yoga (mind-control) nor sacrifices, nor Japa (muttering of prayers) nor austere penance nor any sacred vows nor ritual. Rāma alone should be remembered, Rāma alone should be glorified; and it is the catalogue of Rāma's virtues alone that

should be given ear to. Forswearing perversity, my soul, adore Him whose great vow it is to sanctify the fallen, as is declared by seers and saints, the Vedas and Purāṇas; who has not secured redemption by worshipping Śrī Rāma? (1—4)

छं०—पाई न केहिं गति पतित पावन राम भजि सुनु सठ मना ।
गनिका अजामिल ब्याध गीध गजादि खल तारे घना ॥
आभीर जमन किरात खस स्वपचादि अति अघरूप जे ।
कहि नाम बारक तेपि पावन होहिं राम नमामि ते ॥ १ ॥
रघुबंस भूषन चरित यह नर कहहिं सुनहिं जे गावहीं ।
कलि मल मनोमल धोइ बिनु श्रम राम धाम सिधावहीं ॥
सत पंच चौपाईं मनोहर जानि जो नर उर धरै ।
दारुन अबिद्या पंच जनित बिकार श्री रघुबर हरै ॥ २ ॥
सुंदर सुजान कृपा निधान अनाथ पर कर प्रीति जो ।
सो एक राम अकाम हित निर्बानप्रद सम आन को ॥
जाकी कृपा लवलेस ते मतिमंद तुलसीदासहूँ ।
पायो परम बिश्रामु राम समान प्रभु नाहीं कहूँ ॥ ३ ॥

Listen, my stupid soul: who has not been saved by adoring Śrī Rāma, the purifier of the fallen? The harlot (Pingalā), Ajāmila, the hunter (Vālmīki), the vulture (Jaṭāyu), the elephant and many other wretches have been delivered by Him. Even Ābhīras (a hilly tribe inhabiting the south-west coast in the ancient times), Yavanas, Kirātas (Bhīls), Khasas (another hill-tribe found in Assam), Chāṇḍālas (the pariah) and others, the very embodiments of grievous sin, are hallowed by merely uttering Your name even once: I adore You, O Rāma. Men who repeat to others, listen to (when repeated by others) or chant alone this narrative of Śrī Rāma (the Ornament of Raghu's race) thereby wipe out the sins that are incident to the Kali age as well as the impurities of their soul, and ascend to the Abode of Śrī Rāma without any difficulty. Nay the Chief of the Raghus cures the perversities, caused by the fivefold* ignorance, of those men who treasure up in their heart even a few Chaupāīs (small four-footed verses) of this narrative that appeal to them as most charming. If there is anyone who is all-beautiful, all-wise and all-merciful and who is fond of the forlorn, it is Rāma and Rāma alone; who else can compare with Him as a disinterested friend and a bestower of eternal bliss? Nowhere can we find a lord like Śrī Rāma, by an iota of whose grace even the dull-witted Tulasīdāsa has found supreme peace. (1—3)

* The fivefold Ignorance has been characterized as mistaking (1) the unreal for real, (2) the ephemeral for the eternal, (3) the painful as pleasurable, (4) the impure for pure and (5) that which is worth discarding for something worth acquiring.

दो०—मो सम दीन न दीन हित तुम्ह समान रघुबीर ।
अस बिचारि रघुबंस मनि हरहु बिषम भव भीर ॥ १३० (क) ॥
कामिहि नारि पिआरि जिमि लोभिहि प्रिय जिमि दाम ।
तिमि रघुनाथ निरंतर प्रिय लागहु मोहि राम ॥ १३० (ख) ॥

There is no one so miserable as I nor such a friend of the miserable as You, O Hero of Raghu's line! Realizing this, O Jewel of Raghu's race, take away my fear of transmigration, which is so terrible. May You be ever so dear to me, Rāma, as woman is dear to a lustful man, and as lucre is dear to the greedy, O Lord of the Raghus. (130 A-B)

श्लो०—यत्पूर्वं प्रभुणा कृतं सुकविना श्रीशम्भुना दुर्गमं
श्रीमद्रामपदाब्जभक्तिमनिशं प्राप्त्यै तु रामायणम् ।
मत्वा तद्रघुनाथनामनिरतं स्वान्तस्तमःशान्तये
भाषाबद्धमिदं चकार तुलसीदासस्तथा मानसम् ॥ १ ॥
पुण्यं पापहरं सदा शिवकरं विज्ञानभक्तिप्रदं
मायामोहमलापहं सुविमलं प्रेमाम्बुपूरं शुभम् ।
श्रीमद्रामचरित्रमानसमिदं भक्त्यावगाहन्ति ये
ते संसारपतङ्गघोरकिरणैर्दह्यन्ति नो मानवाः ॥ २ ॥

The same mysterious "Mānasa-Rāmāyaṇa" (the story of Śrī Rāma figuratively spoken of as a Mānasa lake) which was composed of yore by the blessed Lord Śambhu, the best of all poets, with the object of developing unceasing devotion to the lotus feet of the all-beautiful Śrī Rāma, has been likewise rendered into the vulgar tongue by Tulasīdāsa for dispersing the gloom of his heart, cognizing the fact that it is devoted to the Name of Śrī Rāma (the Lord of the Raghus). This glorious, holy, purifying, blessed and most limpid Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits ever begets happiness; nay, it bestows both wisdom and Devotion, wipes out delusion, infatuation and impurity and is brimfull with the water of love. Men who devoutly take a plunge into it are never scorched with the burning rays of the sun of worldly illusion. (1—2)

[PAUSE 30 FOR A THIRTY-DAY RECITATION]

[PAUSE 9 FOR A NINE-DAY RECITATION]

इति श्रीमद्रामचरितमानसे सकलकलिकलुषविध्वंसने सप्तमः सोपानः समाप्तः ।

Thus ends the seventh descent into the Mānasa lake of Śrī Rāma's exploits, that eradicates all the impurities of the Kali age.

श्रीरामायणजीकी आरती

आरति श्रीरामायनजी की । कीरति कलित ललित सिय पी की ॥

गावत ब्रह्मादिक मुनि नारद । बालमीक बिग्यान बिसारद ॥

सुक सनकादि सेष अरु सारद । बरनि पवनसुत कीरति नीकी ॥

गावत बेद पुरान अष्टदस । छओ सास्त्र सब ग्रंथन को रस ॥

मुनि जन धन संतन को सरबस । सार अंस संमत सबही की ॥

गावत संतत संभु भवानी । अरु घटसंभव मुनि बिग्यानी ॥

ब्यास आदि कबिबर्ज बखानी । कागभुसुंडि गरुड के ही की ॥

कलि मल हरनि बिषय रस फीकी । सुभग सिंगार मुक्ति जुबती की ॥

दलन रोग भव मूरि अमी की । तात मात सब बिधि तुलसी की ॥

An Arati Song*

(Rendered into English verse by Madhava Sharan M. A., LL. B.)

Soft lights we wave, soft lights display,
Before this Lord of Sita's lay—
The Ramayana, so sweet and dear,
So beautiful, without a peer;

Which gods like Brahma, Narada sing.
The ant-hill sage, soul-seers' king,
Suka, Sarada, Sesha, boy sages four,
The wind-god's son recount this lore
With great delight and voices gay.

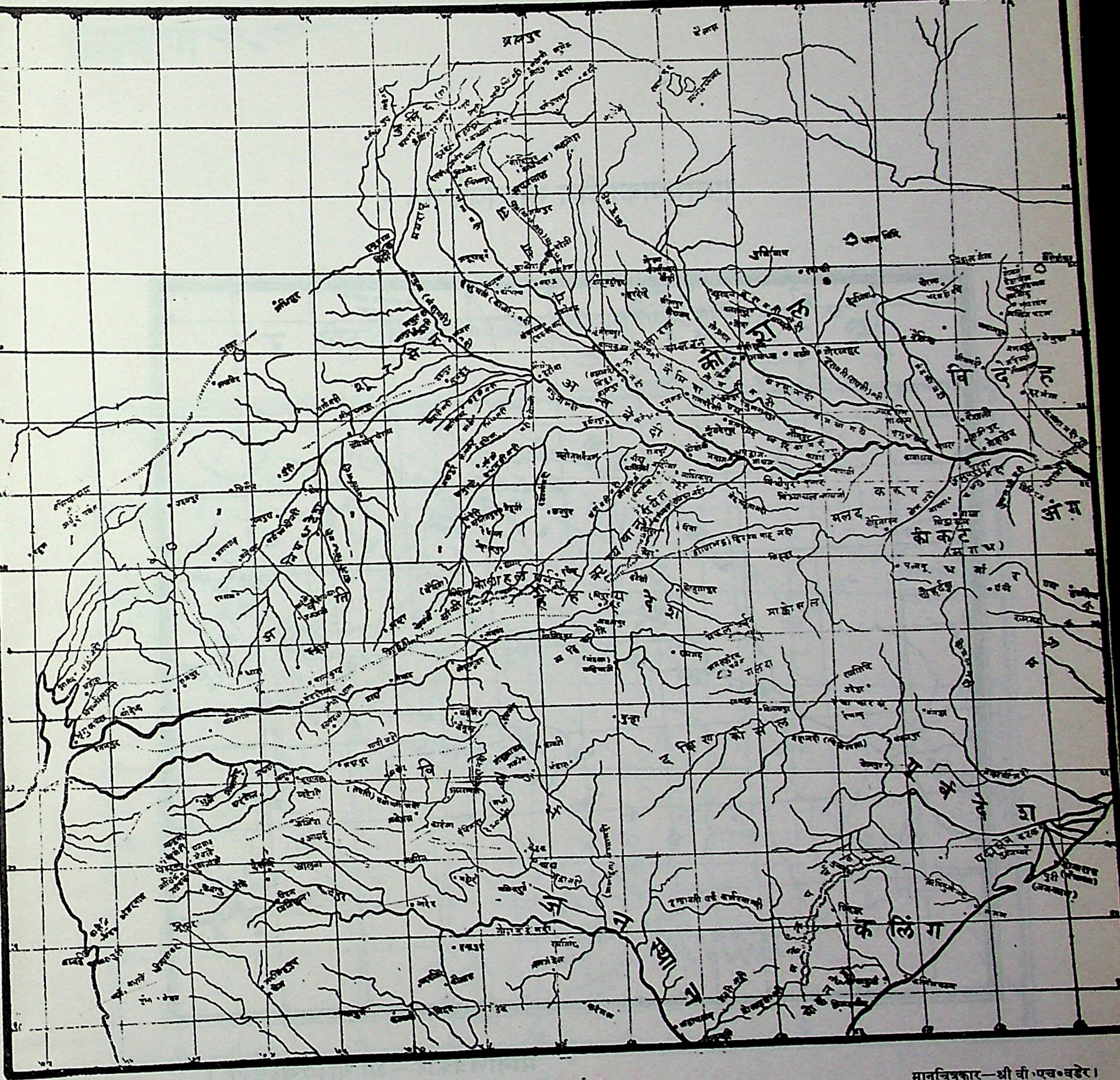
The holy books their music mix
To sing this gist of Sastras six,
Of all good works, of all good thought;
The wealth of sages; yet what not
Of all the saints ?—their mainstay.

Uma and Sankar e'er intone,
As well the wise Agastya pot-grown.
The crow's, Garud's it heart indwells.
The poets great like Vyas and else
In ecstasies this song relay.

Shuns sensuous joy, sins' abluent,
The dame of Mukti's ornament;
Ambrosial herb rebirth to cure,
And parents both, 'tis only sure,
For Tulsidas in every way.

---

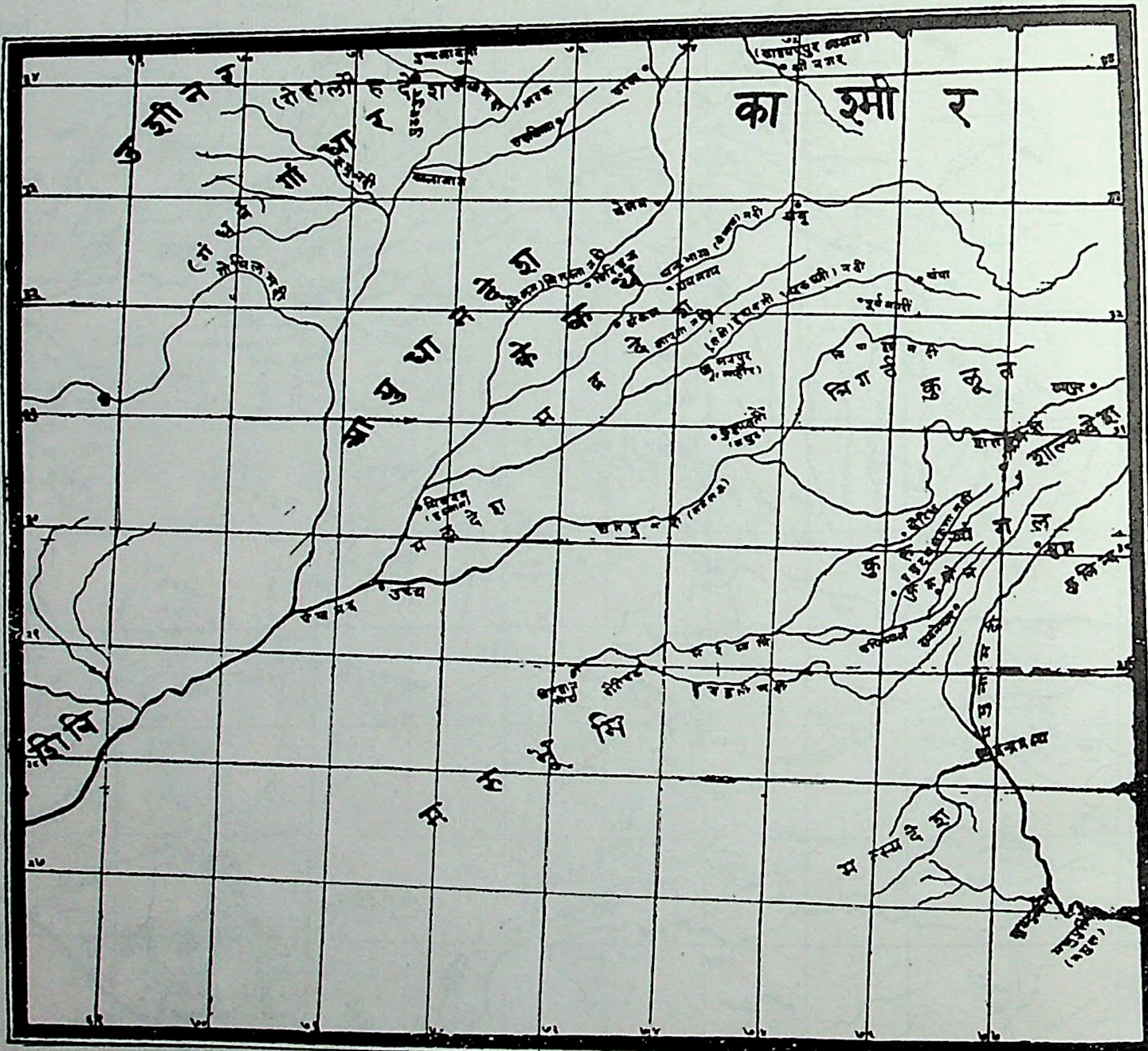
* A hymn of praise addressed to *Śrī Rāmāyaṇa* at the time of waving lights while worshipping the same.



रामायणकालीन भारतवर्ष नं० १

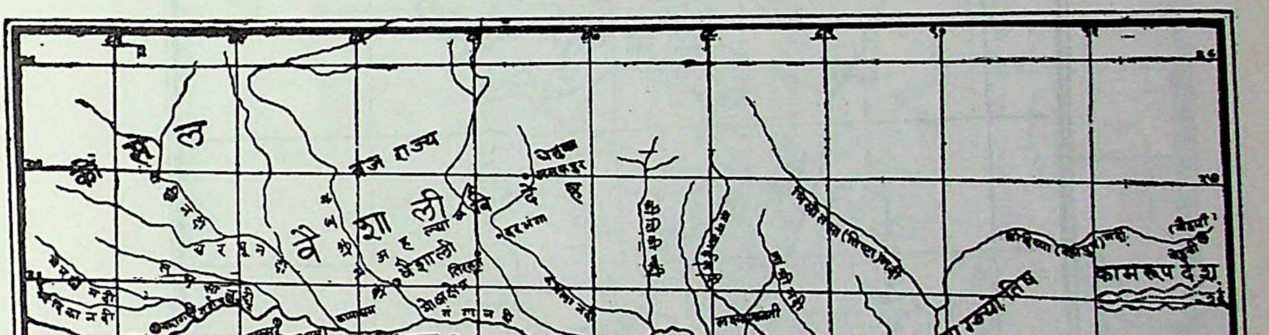
मानचित्रकार—श्री वी॰एच॰वडेर।

रामायणकालीन भारतवर्ष नं० २



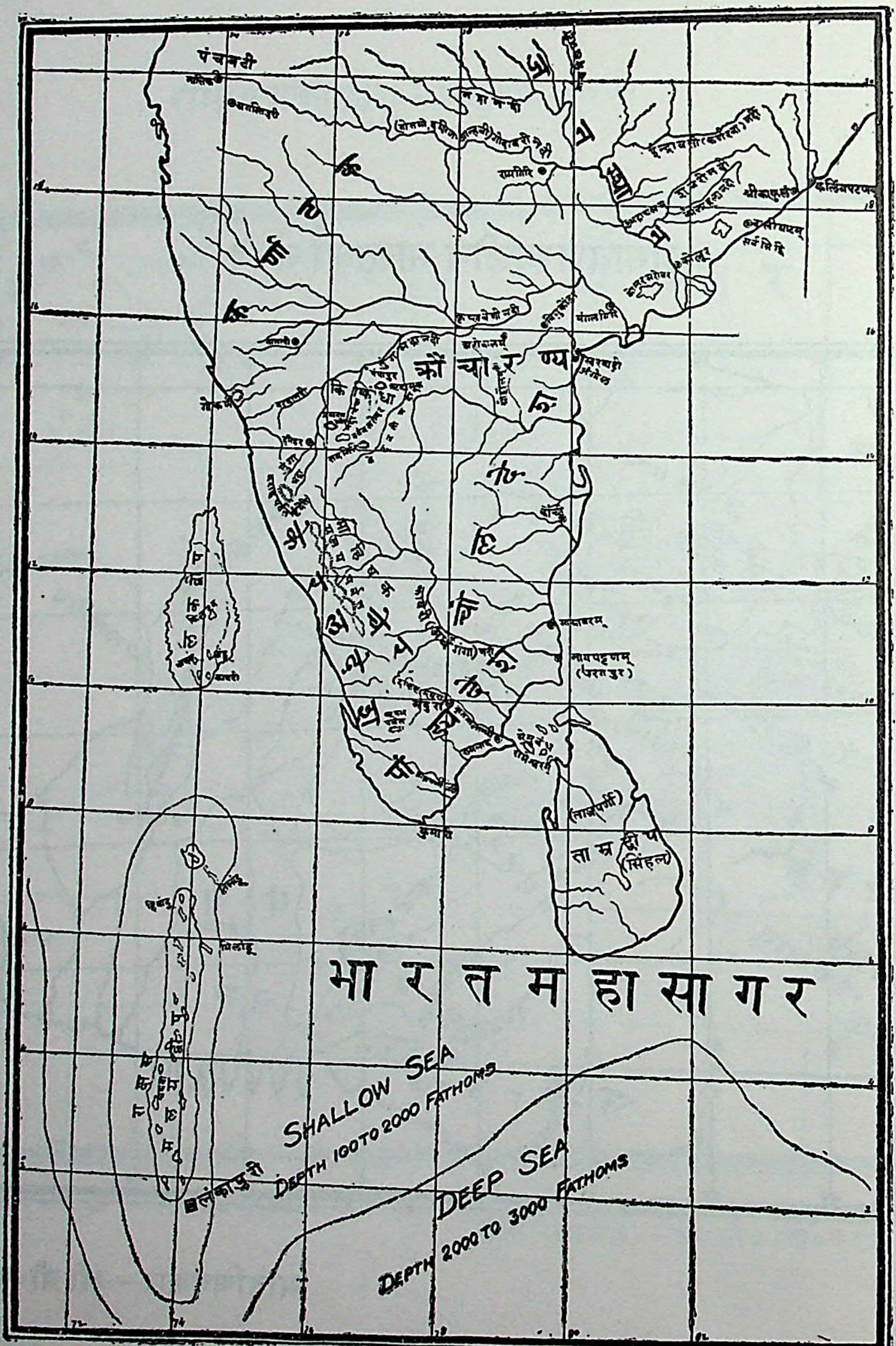
मानचित्रकार—श्री वी०एच०वडेर ।

रामायणकालीन भारतवर्ष नं० ३



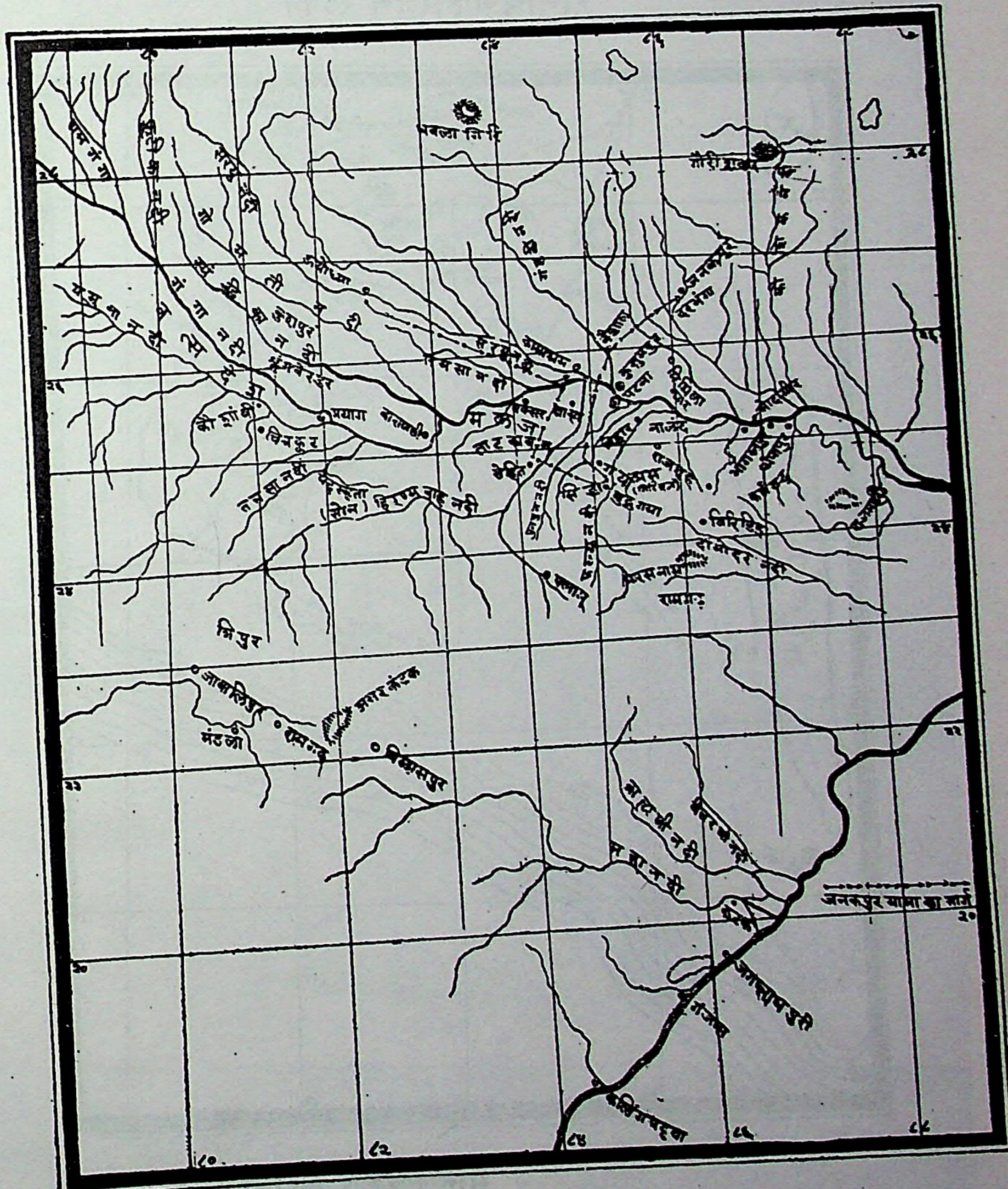
मानचित्रकार—श्री वी० एच० वडेर।

रामायणकालीन भारतवर्ष नं ४



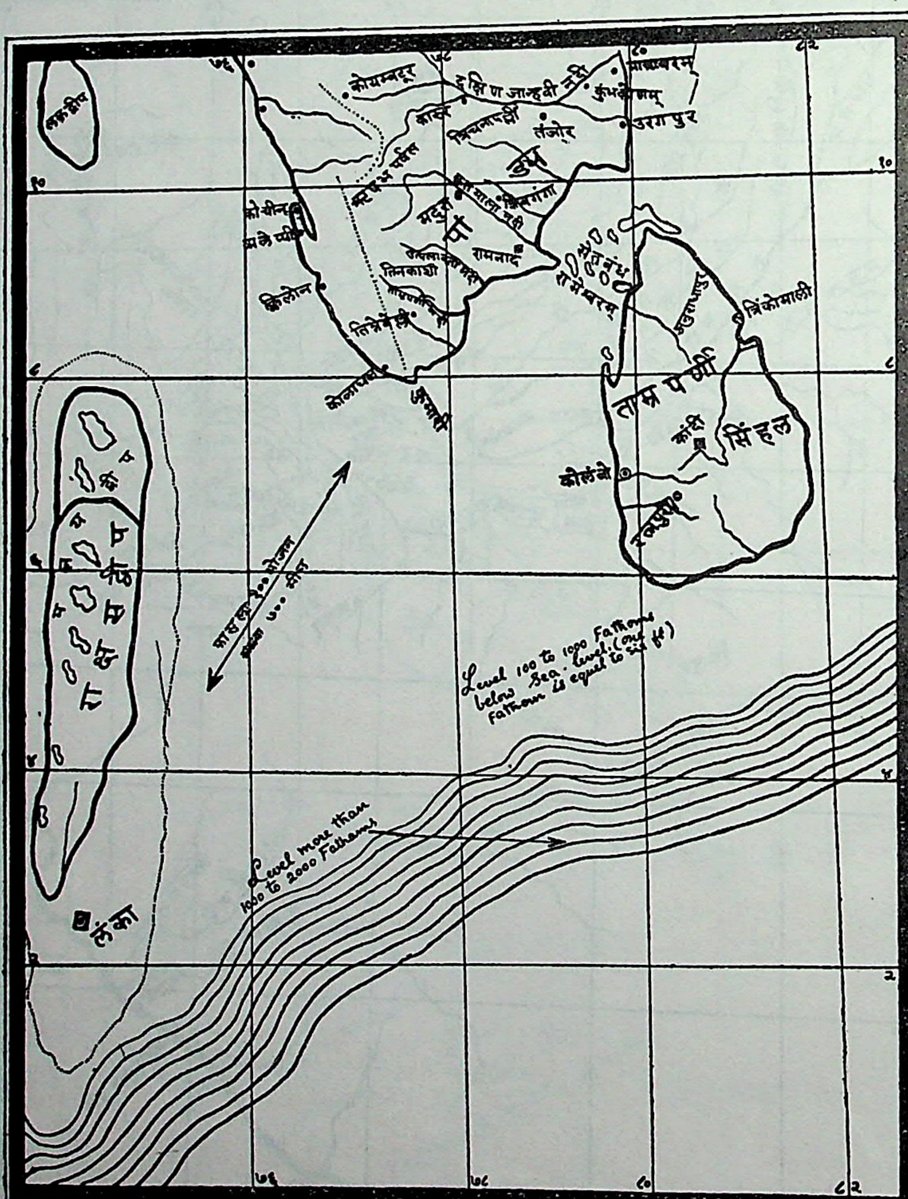
दक्षिण भारत और लंका (मानाचित्रकार श्री वी० एच० वडेर)

रामायणकालीन भारतवर्ष नं० ५

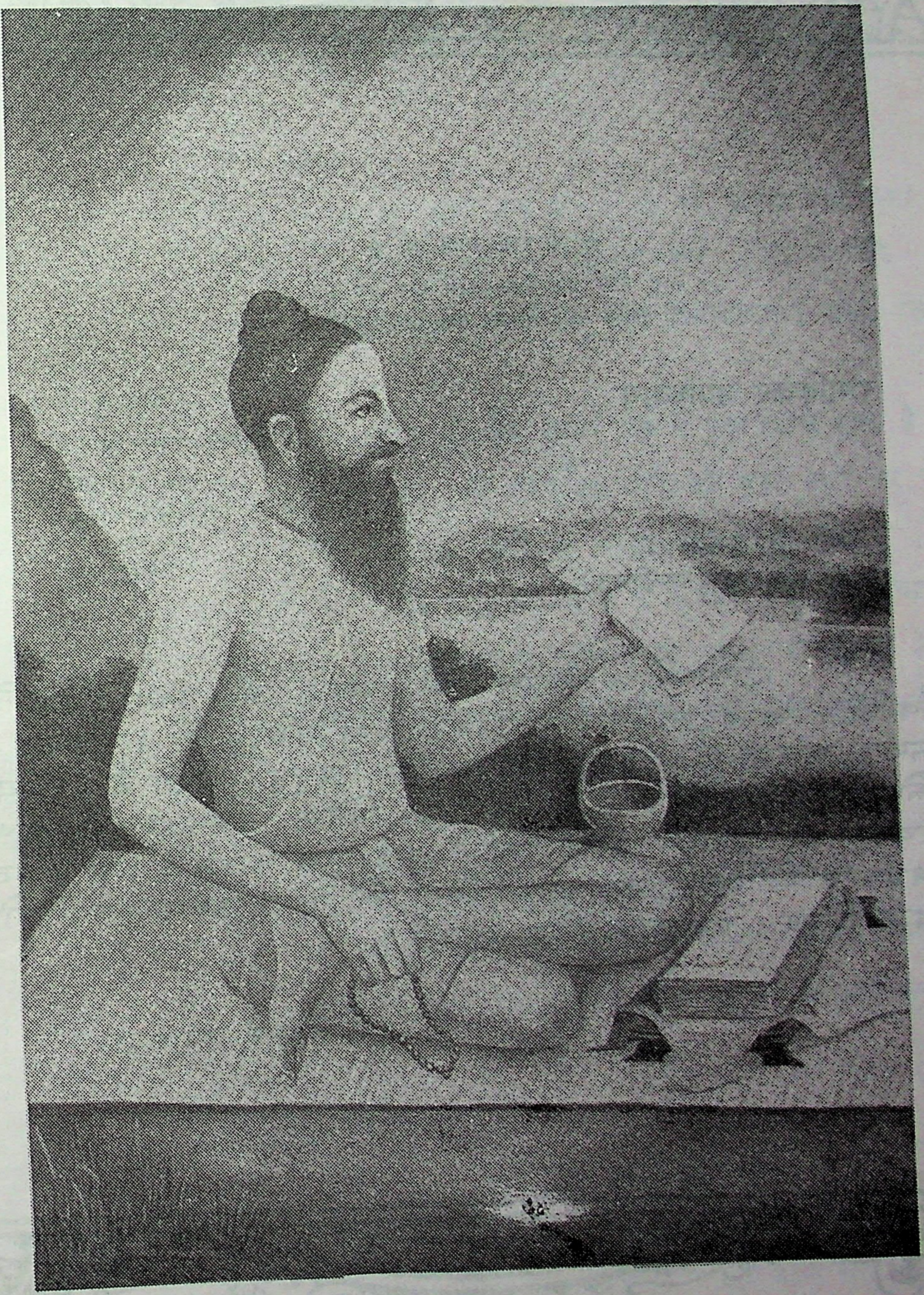


श्रीरामकी जनकपुर यात्रा (मानचित्रकार श्री वी०एच०वडेर)

रामायणकालीन लंका



मानचित्रकार श्री वी०एच०वडेर।



गोस्वामी तुलसीदासजी

★ श्री रामः शरण मम ★

जासु नाम भव भेषज हरन घोर त्रय शूल।
सो कृपाल मोहि तो पर सदा रहहु अनुकूल ॥

रामकिंकर उपाध्याय

फोन : २४३०६३

तुलसी तत्त्वानुसन्धान केन्द्र
४/२७३, रानीघाट
(पुराना) कानपुर-२

श्री जयप्रकाश
श्री गीता प्रेस (चण्डीगढ)

29/3/85

रामचरित मानस के वामन और विराट रूप में प्रकाशित सभी ग्रन्थों की अपनी उपयोगिता है। यह संस्करण मानस को विराट के रूप में प्रस्तुत करता है। ग्रन्थ को सादर स्थापित करने के लिए जिस संस्करण की आवश्यकता थी उसको भली भाँति यह पूरा करता है। मुझे यह विश्वास है कि ग्रन्थ सभी लोगों के लिए अत्यन्त उपयोगी सिद्ध होगा। प्रकाशन के लिए बधाई।

रामकिंकर उपाध्याय

॥ राधा ॥

कृष्णचन्द्र अग्रवाल

गीतावाटिका
पो० गीतावाटिका
(गोरखपुर)

दिनांक: 12-3-82

श्री जयप्रकाश
श्री गीता प्रेस (चण्डीगढ़)

सम्मान्य बन्धु,

सादर हरिस्मरण ।

आपका 24-2-82 का कृपा पत्र 26-2-82 को प्राप्त हुआ था । आपने 'श्रीरामचरितमानस' की दो प्रतियाँ — एक पूजनीया माँजी के लिये तथा एक 'हनुमानप्रसाद पोद्दार ग्रन्थालय' के लिये भिजवायीं, इसके लिये हार्दिक साधुवाद ।

'श्रीरामचरितमानस' बहुत ही सुन्दर रूप में प्रकाशित हुआ है । श्रीरामचरितमानस की बहुत माँग है, गीताप्रेस वाले इस माँग को पूरा नहीं कर पा रहे हैं । आपने उस माँग को पूरा करने का बीड़ा उठाया है, इस साहस पूर्ण प्रयास के लिये आस्तिक जगत् की ओर से आपको सदा साधुवाद प्राप्त होगा । गीता एवं रामायण हमारे धर्म के दो आधार स्तम्भ हैं, ये घर-घर पहुँच जायँ, इसके लिये परमपूज्य श्रीसेठजी तथा पूज्य श्रीभाईजी सतत प्रयत्न करते रहे । आप उसी परम्परा में प्रयत्नशील हैं, आपका हार्दिक अभिनन्दन ।

पूजनीया माँजी प्रसन्न हैं, उनका प्यार एवं आशीर्वाद । बस, निष्ठा के साथ लगे रहिये, शुभकार्य में भगवान् की सहायता प्राप्त होती ही है, आपको भी प्राप्त होगी । सम्मान्य श्रीस्वामीजी मंगलस्वरूपजी से सादर प्रणाम ।

शेष भगवत्कृपा ।

आपका अपना

कृष्णचन्द्र अग्रवाल

(कृष्णचन्द्र अग्रवाल)

श्री गीता प्रेस चण्डीगढ़

मुख्य कार्यालय

67-इण्डस्ट्रियल एरिया
चण्डीगढ़-160002

शाखा कार्यालय

सी-3/119, अशोक विहार, फैज़-II
दिल्ली-110052

बिक्री केन्द्र

डिप्टीगंज सदर बाज़ार
दिल्ली-110006